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VICISSITUDES ABROAD;

OR,

THE GHOST OF MY FATHER.

A Novel.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

BY

MRS. BENNETT,

AUTHOR OF

ANNA; JUVENILE INDISCRETIONS; AGNES DE COURCI;
ELLEN; BEGGAR GIRL, &c.

—————Were Providence inclin'd,
In unrelenting wrath to human kind,
To take back every blessing that she gave,
From the wide ruin she would memory save:
Else would severest ills be soon o'rcast,
Or kind oblivion bury them at last.
But memory, with more than Egypt art,
Embalming every grief that wounds the heart,
Sits at the altar she has rais'd to woe,
And feeds the source whence tears for ever flow.

CURRAN.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
PRINTED AT THE
Minerva-Press,
FOR LANE, NEWMAN, AND CO.
LEADENHALL-STREET.
1806.

VICISSITUDES.

I RESUME the story of my friends with a sensation none has so well expressed as our Scots bard—

— Like the memory of days that are past,
Pleasing, yet mournful, to the soul.

The solitude and devotion to which Madame de Verencourt and her daughter retired, could not excuse them from an occasional intercourse with the two executors of the will of a husband and father whose memory was so sacred.

The Duke, indeed, very soon waited on the mournful relict, to take leave of her

before his return to the Castle de Verencourt, when she mentioned the intended excursion of Julia and Madame Soubise to England, and his permission for the Abbe Riccobini's protection, was granted without the smallest hesitation; he then affectionately embraced Madame de V., gravely bowed to Julia, and departed.

Madame de V., more fond of the little Adelaide, as she seemed to interest no one else, called at the Hotel de Courville, when she left the Convent, to witness improvements, which the Marquise described as extraordinary, but which, in fact, still kept her a very weak and backward child.

My Charlotte, indeed, was older, but there was such a difference in the healthy looks of the two children, that she proposed to my faithful Willis the superintendence of both.

Willis was proud of her office, and faithfully discharged its various duties; and the Marquise accepted Madame de V.'s offer of making the young Adelaide part of her

her suite to Loraine, with the most grateful transports.

“ Under such protection,” said she, “ the Marquis will no longer call his child ‘ a German-faced abortion.’ ”

We parted with the good Abbe, blessing, and blessed, and thus, Madame, you see us peaceably set down in one of the finest *chateaus* in France, with little more interest in the great world than was kept alive by the letters of our friends, some of whom, particularly the Marquise and Madame Soubise, acquainted us with the momentous cabals of the Court, and the scandal of the town.

Happy, happy, era! how serene were the days, hours, weeks, years, when our avocations were only varied by acts of benevolence—by the visits of our friends—by the progressive improvement of the two children—by a letter now and then from the Duke de Verencourt, which raised a sigh of regret in the bosom of Madame de V. and sometimes crimsoned the cheek

of her daughter—and once every year by the appearance of the rich relict, and her lovely heiress at Court, where many a passionate address would have gladly detained them.

Meanwhile, treble the period of the exile had passed by, and only the Abbe Rocquelar appeared, to take possession of his old corner in the Hotel de Courville, having returned, as he said, on account of ill health.

But the fact was, the Marquis had served the Abbe, as the Abbe would have served every body—that is to say, after Pylades and Orestesing it, with that respectable companion every where, and in all sorts of scenes, he had taken a beautiful peasant from her parents, just twelve minutes before the Abbe's arrangement for the same purpose was completed!

As the poor Abbe expected no such thing, and had set his heart on the pretty peasant, he grew sick of travelling, and, without taking leave of his patron, departed,
vowing

vowing not to die his debtor; and the Abbe was, in some cases, a man of his word.

The Marquise sent for the Abbe to Versailles, but while she flattered herself, her address drew the *confident* of her husband off his guard, the cunning Priest fairly turned the tables—he exchanged many extraordinary anecdotes with the Marquise, for her solemn promise not to betray his *simplicity* to her husband, and thus he exulted in the first step towards performing his vow.

At length the return of the Marquis was announced, but no longer entitled to the epithet of *pretty*. After the departure of the Abbe, he carried his little peasant to Rome, where, happening to form one of his hasty friendships with a *gentleman* whose management of the dice he could not entirely understand, and who, moreover, admired the pretty peasant, a quarrel arose, and, before the Marquis was aware of the intended villany, his adversary run

a stiletto into one of his beautiful eyes, and immediately made his escape, accompanied by the pretty peasant.

The anguish of the wound produced a fever, during which he had time for meditation ; the honourable home from which he was now a voluntary wanderer, with all its comforts, recurred to his recollection, and he vowed to return and reform.

Thyrsis the *sick*, and Thyrsis the *well*, would perhaps have agreed more in the old way, had the misfortune of the eye been removed with the fever ; but, besides loss of sight, it remained so disgusting a spectacle, as obliged him to wear a covering of green silk, and the chirurgical operation had been so ill performed as to leave a deep scar on his cheek. It is hardly possible to conceive a circumstance more mortifying ; he, however, profited somewhat by a disaster that gave the death-blow to vanity, and returned to Paris no less despoiled of fortune than beauty, having been alternately the prey of sharpers, and the

the dupe of courtezans, in all parts of Europe.

The amiable Marquise, though she had at length ceased to grieve at his absence, and though seriously hurt at repeated charges in the few letters he wrote, 'to remove the little German abortion either to his Castle or to Bergen, before his return,' pitying the disaster, she affected not to perceive, pleaded so successfully in his favour at Versailles, that he was extremely well received, and promised to be re-instated in an office of which he was now certainly more worthy than when he before possessed it.

Madame de V. and her daughter happened to be at Paris at this period ; the former never could be reconciled to a man whose enormities had cost her so much vexation, but her coldness was not so mortifying as the frank good-humoured indifference of Julia, who, though it was impossible a cordial intimacy could subsist between them, always respected misfortune.

The most vexatious part of the business just now to us was respecting Adelaide.

Lovely creature! how early did she establish herself a favourite with us all, and how tender, how unbounded, was the interest she excited. Though my Charlotte was near a year older, Adelaide was already as tall, and she was much more quick as well as docile; when you are told this by a mother, far from thinking meanly of her daughter, you will understand something of Adelaide's pretensions.

I cannot describe her as she was then, more than as the most lovely of children, still less can I give you an idea of what she grew to be. She resembled Julia in her most attractive moments—she resembled her father when I first remembered him—she had some of her mother's best traits—but, what enchanted us all, she was a perfect little Madame de Verencourt, her silver tones, her grace, her air; that she should indeed copy manners of which she was a constant spectator, is not strange, for Madame de V. doated on her.

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The father, however, a father with whom neither of the ladies chose to be on intimate terms, vexed them ; but, like most other difficulties in perspective, this ceased to be one as soon as explained.

The Marquis had not only dissipated all his personal fortune, but contracted great debts, and the De Courville's estates passed the female line, so that there was no great difficulty in persuading him to transfer his right to a child, who was a burthen to one parent, disliked by the other, and wholly unprovided for.

Before my friends returned to Loraine, Lady Louisa Preston, to whose family Mademoiselle de Verencourt had been introduced in London, dragged her half-unwilling brother to Paris.

The Marquis, who had also visited them, pledged his good offices as a near relation of Julia, on behalf of the Earl of Preston : without remembering to acquaint his Lordship, how his interest stood in his aunt's family ; he, however, assisted Madame

Soubise in doing the honours of her country, to the worthy brother and amiable sister.

The Marquis, no longer *pretty*, had sense enough to make himself still of importance at Court, by studying the caprice, and flattering the foibles, of both sexes. And thus he still contrived to feed reviving vanity, at the expence of those with whom he associated ; he had vowed to *reform* his life, but contented himself with *altering* it.

No husband could be more politely attentive than the Marquis ; but his wife was not a whit more happy than when he was the Queen's pretty Marquis.

Lord Preston was as much a John Bull as any gentleman-bred Lord could be ; he hated all the French, excepting the two ladies, his friends, one of whom he wished to anglicise ; and one man, De Courville, who intended to frenchify him ; and had the former plan succeeded as well as the latter, his Lordship would not have regretted the few thousands he sunk at Paris.

But

But the Marquis, with infinite good humour, carried two points, against which English prejudice revolted: he made him often the companion of a French Priest, the Abbe, whom he hated, and persuaded him into a brilliant establishment for an opera girl, of whom he was weary in three days; so that the Earl, who came to France on purpose to make love to a beautiful heiress, would have found the person, on whose interest he chiefly depended, an insuperable bar to his wishes, had no other existed.

Madame de Verencourt, having waited to pay her respects to the English visitors, and engaged them to follow her to Loraine, returned, with her daughter, to the peaceful abode of the Hamadryads, the haunt of the Sylvan deities, where nothing of the fabled Arcadia, of convenience, of beauty, and elegance, were wanting to render it the delight of the owner, and the admiration of the world.

Ah, Lady N. it is no longer so! Anarchy, rude ruffian, Anarchy, has destroyed the *unique* pride of Nature—not one stone is left on the other, of the fairest work of art. “Turn from it hopeless thought.”

The Duke de Verencourt was, at this period, impelled, by loyal duty and personal friendship, to appear at Versailles. His Majesty's disputes, with his parliament, were growing very serious; the Bretons in particular were breaking the bounds of that profound respect with which the grand Monarque was usually treated, and it was becoming a fashion for the King's friends to rally round the throne.

The Duke often met the Marquise, from her he heard the most enthusiastic praise of Mademoiselle de Verencourt, with what she called the most provoking indifference.

The amiable Marquise was always admired by the Duke, and attended to by him with a deference that would have flattered the vanity of a coquette; but she penetrated the motive, and appreciated it accordingly.

“Well,”

“ Well,” said she, one day at court, “ you are no longer the lover of the charming Julia ; but is there a reason you should cease to be her friend ? ”

“ I have not ceased to be her friend.”

“ No ! ”

“ No.”

“ Well, let us see ; the good man, your uncle, made you the guardian of his daughter, with intent, no doubt, you should be the dragon to guard the Hesperian fruit : very well, let us now see, with what fidelity you executed the trust ; you surprise your valet with an order to prepare your toilette, he is actually commanded to comb your hair and pare your nails—occupations of no sort of use in the old Castle at Languedoc : very well, you gallop up to Paris, put on mourning, hear a hundred and fifty masses for the soul of the good M. de Verencourt, and so gallop back again, to brutify at Languedoc. “ Well, Duke, these are sins you will
answer

answer to your confessor, who, if he has compassion or justice, will enjoin you to marry."

"That would be to reward, not punish, my charming Marquise; but who should I, whom, you say, am an hermit, and whom, I say, will certainly return to Languedoc, who should I marry? none of this brilliant circle would go there."

"Certainly not."

"What then is to be done?"

"The question is really too profound: all I can do for you, is to explain, what, if you do not make some pretty demoiselle a duchess, is *not* to be done."

"Begin then, for I shall not, assuredly, do that."

"Very well, we shall see; but what do you say to that English beauty on the Queen's right hand?"

"She would be beautiful indeed, if she were content to be English; but observe, she *rouges* very ill."

"She

“ She will improve. Do you know she is the lady you must marry—is not that very extraordinary ?”

“ Perfectly so ; but is it a settled matter, have I no privilege ?”

“ None.” The Duke smiled, and bowed.

“ Yes, you may be amused, but the fiat is gone forth, from which there is no appeal.”

“ How infinitely condescending ! And the lady, what will she say to the undressed hair, long nails, and old castle, of the Languedoc Orson ?”

“ That is your affair : mine stops at your marriage, which would be the most accommodating event in the world ; for observe, Duke, that very handsome cavalier, the Earl of Preston, brother to the English beauty, having had the honour to entertain your fair ward at his old castle in England, which, St. Herman says, is very fine, though not quite savage, like—”

“ Languedoc,” interrupted the Duke, bowing, with an embarrassed air.

The Marquise nodded, shrugged her shoulder, and proceeded—"This Earl then is to marry our Julia, as soon, or, perhaps, before you marry his sister."

"All this is very natural, indeed," said the Duke, deeply colouring; "but what would you think of a dragon, who suffered the fruit to be plucked by a foreigner—"

"That again is your affair. If you wish to know more of my arrangements, come to my toilette to-morrow, for see the Queen rises."

The crowd, which, on the breaking up of the court, thronged every way, left the Duke immoveable, till the galleries and every part were quite emptied, when he started from his reverie, and retired.

What were the Duke de Verencourt's thoughts, after parting with the Marquise; what his dreams when he slept—if he did sleep; and what the subject of his meditations, waking—may be conjectured by the event.

Four years had elapsed, since a certain
incident

incident at the Hotel de Courville dissolved all his visions of happiness; his uncle had been dead more than three; and yet, though he constantly interested himself in the movements of his fair cousin, it had not before occurred to him, that having been appointed her guardian, for some purpose or other, he had been shamefully deficient, in respect to the widow and daughter of his best friend. It is true, that when convinced Julia loved De Courville, he had called on Heaven and all the saints to witness, that he would see her no more; and, to avoid meeting a creature so destructive to his peace, he retired to a distant province, where, if he had not, as the Marquise said, turned savage, there were those who would say, he had sacrificed the gentleman to the misanthrope.

“This is fine reasoning,” said the Marquise, to whom the Duke confided his thoughts; “but it has one great fault, it is past remedy.”

“Past

“ Past remedy ! not exactly so, Marquise.”

“ Too late by three years ; you have no choice, you must marry according to my arrangement, that my good English friend, the Earl, may marry according to his.”

The Duke turned away abruptly, and the Marquise, who longed for nothing so much as to see Julia, Duchess de Verencourt, perceived with self-gratulation, he was both angry and embarrassed.

Julia, with her mother, her friend, Madame Soubise, and the two little girls, whom she spoiled in spite of my remonstrances, were in the actual enjoyment of real happiness, though in the bosom of retirement, when the Duke de Verencourt was announced.

Madame de V.'s surprise was blended with pleasure, while Julia, concluding it was a visit of business, received him with a grace and good humour, that brought back past times. She complimented him on his
good

good looks, enquired after her young cousins, and wished to know every particular of the Abbe Riccobini, in a manner so irresistibly sweet, that he withdrew, to demand a private audience of Madame de V., the most charmed and passionate of men.

That best of mothers, who had long since despaired of seeing her Julia the wife of this worthy man, heard the avowal of his sentiments, with unaffected approbation; and, as experience, the best of female schools, had taught her daughter the difference between real and superficial endowments, she encouraged him to hope every thing from her.

In fine, this long desired marriage was celebrated with that entire satisfaction to Madame de V., that rapture to the Duke, that placid happiness to Julia, and delight to her friends, which no words can describe.

We had not, indeed, spectacles or fetes, to mark an era of such grateful felicity;
nor

nor were our poor, like those of the neighbouring demesnes, the wretched slaves of their lord : but well-directed beneficence can never want objects ; and it was in the hearts of the afflicted that trophies were raised, to commemorate the union of the two heirs of the noble house of De Verencourt.

Madame de V., who now considered her temporal happiness secure, consented to accompany her daughter to Paris, after the visit of their English friends ; but as, when Lady Louisa proposed it as a compliment to the bride, Lord Preston declared he would rather go to hell, they returned to their own country ; the former regretting, and the latter heartily cursing France, and all its inhabitants except one.

The court of the Grand Monarque had passed its climax of greatness ; it was no longer the scene of gaiety, coquetry, and, perhaps, licentiousness : care and melancholy clouded the brow of Louis ; anger, chagrin, and often disappointment, overcast the

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the fine features of the Queen. Our reception was, however, not the less gracious; we occupied the Palais de Verencourt, instead of Madame de V.'s hotel, and after the usual round of gratulation, left Paris for the Castle de Verencourt, in Languedoc, where the popularity of the Duke was proved by universal rejoicing, and his generosity, by the returns he made to the attachment of his province.

As this was the last excursion, Madame de V. declared, she would make from her chateau, the Duke and Duchess returned with us thither, after passing the summer at Languedoc.

The Duke was, in the pure, not prostituted sense of the word, a true patriot; he could not but feel and lament those errors in the government, which continually changed men without amending measures; but neither could he witness the intemperate, and often wanton zeal of the opposers of the ministers, without anticipating consequences, equally fatal to both:
and

and should the dreadful alternative ever be imposed on his choice, between king and people, the example of all his progenitors, his own sentiments, high rank, and, what was perhaps more binding than either, the personal friendship which always subsisted between him and Louis, left no doubt as to the part he would take.

The perturbed state in which his own province actually was, at this period, would have fixed him there, had not the timidity which was a fatal drawback on the virtuous character of the king, rendered him anxious to have those about him, on whose tried affection and disinterested friendship he could rely.

Unhappy prince ! it was not the want of adherents of that description, but the impossibility of extricating himself from the labyrinths into which bad men had involved him, that eventually worked his destruction.

The duke, however, continued to divide the year, in the indulgence of the Duchess

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at her mother's chateau, in the interest of his province, and education of his sons, and in attending the court ; till the growing desperation of public affairs enforced the duty of fixing his principal residence at Versailles, where he occupied the highest post to which a man of honour can aspire, in the confidential friendship of a good king.

The Marquise was enchanted at a renewal of intimacy with the Duchess ; the Marquis was profoundly polite ; and the Abbe Rocquelar, still an appendage to the suite of the De Courvilles, officiously servile.

Possessing the treasure of the world in his adored Julia, the Duke found his sentiments were in every respect her's ; her's the desire to conciliate turbulent spirits, her's the loyal attachment, and her's too, the undeviating wish, to see the two sons of her husband emulate the virtues, as they would inherit the fortune of their ancestors. " Louis," said she, " is your heir ; Phillip, mine."

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The Duke hoped for other heirs, but so absolute was the fascination of his lovely wife, that if she spoke, whatever the subject, his soul worshipped every sentence; how then could he, without adoration, hear her suggest the propriety of removing the young Count and his brother, with the Abbe Riccobini, and their suite, to her mother's chateau; where, while proceeding in their education, the Duke would have more frequent opportunities of seeing them, and witnessing their improvements.

The young De Verencourts, and the two little girls, were now under the same roof; and the infant beauty of Adelaide, had the usual effect of beauty, even at the most early age, the boys were rivals, from the moment they saw her.

Charlotte St. Herman was a genteel well made girl, with that cast of features that might be seen an hundred times, without mark or recollection, but when once noted, too agreeable to be soon forgotten; a dunce from mere volatility, possessed
great

great humour, ready at repartee, talked much, laughed more, full of whim, but the essence of good nature; she extremely loved Madame de V., respected the Duke and Duchess, adored her mother, and doated on Adelaide, to whom the Duke, I believe, secretly preferred her; and there was not a domestic in the family but loved the merry Miss St. Herman.

Adelaide grew up a perfect model of symmetry; her face was the faultless index of a docile and ingenuous mind; her fine elastic figure formed for dancing, and her soul for music, she early became a proficient in all the delicate trifles of fashion. French ladies are not remarkable for fine writing, or correct orthography, but Adelaide had a natural genius for both; and while Charlotte caricatured even the master who gave her lessons, Adelaide was employed in copying the most valuable drawings among her aunt's select collection.

The Marquis and Marquise de Courville;

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who

who had passed from total neglect of their lovely Adelaide to admiration of her opening charms, could not regret an arrangement, which, though it alienated their child from them, was of such advantage to herself.

The whole time of the Marquise was taken up by the station she filled at court, where her attendance became the more important, as the Queen could at no time say, "I am happy," with half the truth of a poor mechanic, whose last *sous* was paid for her children's bread.

Secret cabals; innovations of the regal authority; perpetual changes of one venal minister for another; derangement of the royal coffers, exhausted by ill management at home, and the fatal error of supporting the Americans in their revolt, a caprice of the Queen's, which then involved the country in a disastrous war, and finally ended in her own destruction; discontent of the parliament; and above all, the misery of the immense mass, that makes the
lower

lower order of people throughout France, occasioned convulsions in the government, and gave rise to such licentious slanders on herself, and confidential friends, as rendered the Queen's pre-eminence in rank, in splendour, and in power, too dangerous to be envied; and were not the fact notorious, it would not be credited by posterity, that the same woman, with the same habits, principles, and connection, who had been admired as the model of grace and perfection, whose accomplishments were the theme of eloquence and the subject of poetry, adored by her husband, loved by her family, esteemed by intimates, respected by domestics, was now the object of common detestation, as author of the errors of ministry, the mismanagement of finances, the calamities of war, and even the wants of the poor.

Was there a private disaster, it was Maria Antoinette; a public misfortune, it was Maria Antoinette; a vice, more improbable and degrading than the human heart in its

utmost depravity could suggest, or in its most abandoned state of enormity practice, still it was Maria Antoinette.

And still less would it be credited, that the slanders, insults, and injuries, which were levelled at this unhappy princess, originated in a passion, which, in the modern vocabulary, degrades the name of love.

The unprincipled De Chartres would not believe such beauty, spirit, and vivacity, could be exempt from the levity of her sex and country; he beheld her as the prey of his libidinous passions; and in that hope, followed, flattered, adored, and, hailed her as the genius of his happiness: the disappointment was remembered and resented, as long as the vital stream flowed from his black heart.

The Queen did not stoop to complain: her commands to him to leave the country, for a time, were private, but firm; and, when recalled to take possession of the vast property of his father, he appeared at
Court,

Court, under her indignant eye, so humbled and so penitent, as soon to banish from her mind the memory of his offence ; but it is the injurer who cannot forget, and who will not forgive. The soul of De Orleans was, in every respect, dark and impenetrable ; he was a husband, no wife could respect ; a father, no child could honour ; a man, no human being could trust ; and the remorseless enemy of his own blood.

As the period was now arrived, when suspicion, fear, and pecuniary distress, hung like a black curtain before the Court, the Duke and Duchess de Verencourt remained firm at their post, which, of course, prevented their visits to Lorraine as often as heretofore.

My own experience was such, and I had so many fears, which I could not prevail on myself to disclose, even to the Duchess, for the future peace of the young group, over whom Madame de V., now in delicate health, could not have a strict eye, that

however painful the separation from my friend, I felt it a duty to propose taking my station near the children.

I found them still improving. Adelaide had a natural taste for all the graces that adorn her sex, and she owed their exquisite embellishments to the unremitting attention of Madame de Verencourt: she was now in her thirteenth year; remembering *her father* and my *Julia*, I could not conceal from myself, that this was an age, when constantly associating with the sons of the Duke, might give birth to sentiments dangerous to their mutual peace.

The spirits, good humour, and rattle of Charlotte, left her less time for engagements of the heart. She was, besides, extremely fond of fine works: the purses, sashes, work-bags, netting, and fringe of the Duchess, and all her acquaintance, were the handiworks of Charlotte St. Herman, who preferred such employments to reading of any kind, for the important reason, that she could *herself talk* with the
work

work in her hand ; whereas, if the book was there, it was the *author* that spoke.

I remembered it was the employment of the muses that protected them, and did not fear for Charlotte.

The chosen subjects of Adelaide's studies were tenderness and sentiment ; she wrote very pretty elegies ; her songs were all *penseroso* ; and I remarked in her portraits, of which she had a great number, there was not one, but bore a likeness, more or less, to the Count de Verencourt.

When I seriously observed this to the Duchess, she smiled, and desired me to make myself easy, for that the Duke had made up his mind to the business.—“ Our little Adelaide,” said she, “ shall be in good time a duchess.. Alas ! for Charlotte, and her pretty works ; we can only give her a chevalier : she must be content to take my handsome Philip ; and thus we share our fortune and our blessings among those most dear to us both.”

A match for Charlotte St. Herman into the house of De Verencourt, would have transported her mother, if she had not doubted the infallibility of a plan, which depended on the caprice of boys and girls. I was certain Philip must alter extremely, if he could love Charlotte St. Herman, for young as he was, he had no eyes but for Adelaide; and the good Abbe, who attributed the now frequent disagreement of the brothers to the baneful effects of jealousy, strenuously advised a separation of the younger part of the family, as the only means of preserving the fraternal bond unbroken to manhood.

But while we were thus endeavouring to avert distant misfortunes, a present one overwhelmed us with grief.

Although the placid resignation of Madame de Verencourt veiled the barbed arrow in her heart, every day—every occurrence, reminded her of the husband, with whom she had lived so long and so
happy :

happy: grief undermined her naturally good constitution, her gradual decay, like that of her husband, was not observed, till the fatal omens of dissolution left us without hope. From the moment, when her temporal cares were ended, by the marriage of her daughter to the object of her husband's choice, Madame de V. devoted herself to the exercise of religious duties, and expired without a groan, in the arms of the Duchess.

It was not till after her demise, we understood the entire generosity of the Duke's character; for it was then it transpired, that a codicil, annexed to M. de Verencourt's will, gave to Julia the inheritance of his estates, during life only, if she refused the offered hand of the Duke, and totally disinherited her, in his favour, if she either took the veil, or married a De Courville.

The former clause it was that prevented the Duke from renewing his overtures, till

the Marquise alarmed him with the idea of Julia's acceptance of Lord Preston.

Madame de V. left Adelaide ten thousand louis d'ors, on the simple condition of her not leaving the protection of the Duke and Duchess; and added to the generous provision already made by M. de V., two thousand louis d'ors each, to Charlotte and myself.

It was at this period, fortunate for the Duchess, that the affairs of the king became so much more critical, as to render him extremely uneasy in the absence of any of his tried friends. The Duke could not bear a separation; to accompany him, she was obliged to leave the scene of sorrow, and return to Versailles: she had also the goodness to consider, how much her friend and children would suffer, by the continual recollections that must obtrude every hour, and in every part of a house, so late the residence of her sainted mother. We, therefore, all came to the Palais de Verencourt together.

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The Duke's observations on his two sons, followed those of the Abbe. The Duchess had, in the frank generosity of her temper, adopted the younger, not because she was more disposed to love him, but it had always been the plan of the family, to make the second son in nothing inferior to the elder, but the title: this had been the case with her father, and this, she knew, he would have done by his grand-nephews, if he had happened to have no child of his own.

Having made this generous arrangement for him, in point of fortune, she had no suspicion, he could oppose one for his private happiness, which, as she conceived it, was equally eligible.

The Count de Verencourt was extremely like his father, tall, graceful, and elegant; but his face had more in it of sensibility and grandeur, than actual Beauty: he was a scholar, without pedantry, and a real fine gentleman, without affectation. Under the care of the Abbe Riccobini, need I mention

his education. His attachments were durable, and his generosity universal; he revered the Abbe, loved his father, honoured the Duchess, was partial to her friend, esteemed Charlotte, but admired nothing in the creation like Adelaide.

The Chevalier, rather shorter of his age than his brother, and inclined to rotundity, had a very fine face, beautiful eyes, and exquisite complexion: like his brother, he was a good scholar, but not, like him, inclined to keep it secret; he was so far master of his passions, that he could disguise the thing he was, and assume what he was not, with great ease; he suspected the partiality of both his father and tutor to his brother, which, perhaps, did not encrease his respect for either; he had sometimes inveighed against the fate that brought him into the world eleven minutes too late, but the generosity of the Duchess consoled him; his manners could be conciliating; he, like Charlotte, talked much, and laughed more; his conversation was a
mixture

mixture of wit and satire; tenacious of opinion at the instant, though variable on the slightest occasion, he revered his tutor, loved his father, respected the Duchess, romped with Charlotte, and, like his brother, admired only Adelaide.

On our removal from the country, and the Duke and Duchess's constant residence at Versailles, I proposed that the young ladies should become boarders at a Convent for the next year, as was then the general custom for people of condition.

The Abbe seconded me very warmly; the Duchess thought it right to consult the Marquise; and that lady was too partial to my opinion, to oppose it, in any thing respecting her daughter. My faithful servant, Willis, who had saved what she called a good *fortune*, having a longing to see Old England, where, as she said "the King was not afraid of his people." I permitted her to go thither, with leave to return at the end of the year, or not, as she should be then inclined: it was a painful task,
three

three months after every thing was settled, to take leave ; but at length she departed with her *fortune*, and loaded with presents.

The Abbess of the Convent of Assumption was so good as to admit my occasional residence with her boarders, who, indeed, I seldom left for more than one day ; and the Abbe with his pupils were, to the great delight of the former, quietly settled at the Palais de Verencourt—but, with the projected double marriage in view, a general permission to visit the grate of the Convent was not unreasonable.

The Abbe, however, confined the indulgence to a stated hour in the forenoon, three days in every week ; but you will conceive our surprise at finding the twin brothers visiting, each, on different days.

Again the Abbe interposed his authority, but it was impossible to observe these young men without perceiving a growing passion in both, which had *already* disunited the fraternal band we were so anxious to preserve.

The

The Count, though always welcomed by the sparkling eye and dimpled smile of the innocent Adelaide, felt no ecstasy in interviews shared by his brother; while one pretty hand was extended to him, the other was seized by Philip with such an eager grasp, as deprived the Count of power to retain the pledge of amity so dear to his heart; and, while a war of words was carrying on between Philip and Charlotte, which he had the mortification to see delighted Adelaide, it was his occupation to watch every glance of her eye, and every turn in her countenance—and he always returned dejected from the Convent, calculating the hours and minutes that must elapse before he should again see Adelaide, and again be—wretched!

Philip was still less at ease; he had made himself master of the family politics, and knew his brother was the destined husband of Adelaide, as himself was that of Charlotte. Piqued and offended by an arrangement which deprived him of a hope, that became

more dear every time he saw Adelaide, and gave to him the daughter of a dependant on his family, there were times when he could not conceal his discontent.

Charlotte, it is true, was the best humoured, and least assuming of mortals; and her mother, so far from attaching, either to herself or daughter, any consequence from the intentions of the Duchess, observed the most decorous respect towards him, without affecting to hold him, or his interest, in any kind of comparison so dear as his brother; his happy envied elder brother, who, he suspected, not only loved, but was beloved by Adelaide. True, he could small-talk it away, and embellish passing incidents with a thousand drolleries, when Charlotte humourously corrected his propensity to the marvellous; he could turn that correction with such interest on herself, as made Adelaide laugh, but it was his brother who could make her *feel*.

While the youths were thus engrossed by a passion, not more new than ardent, the
hours

hours of study, once so delightful to the good Abbe, became gloomy and unprofitable; their researches were only attracted by the secret feelings of each other, and their emulation confined to a single point, on which the learned Priest could not decide.

The Duke, relying on the natural vivacity of his younger son, which in the army was likely to improve, laughed at the giants created by the two great fabulists, Mrs. St. Herman and the Abbe Riccobini, and charged them not to alarm the Duchess with their chimeras.

“ You forget,” said he, “ the moral virtues arise from the very bosom of the passions; neither the Abbe or myself expected that virtue would be the result of the passion of the Chavelier;” but we were of course silent, without partaking of the fond father’s security.

There came soon after, to board at the Convent, a Mademoiselle Chevereux, only child of one of those obstinate members
of

of parliament, who, charmed with his own abilities for argument and declamation, was neither to be persuaded or frightened out of many of the odd notions he adopted. Besides a great flow of volubility, Monsieur Chevereux possessed a very uncommon advantage for a modern patriot: he was one of the richest men in the kingdom, and always considered as a leader in the monied interest; of the greatest respect—he could, of course, render himself extremely troublesome with impunity.

Mademoiselle Chevereux was the single offspring of this great man, and the heiress of the Sieur D'Toit, a dealer in diamonds, whose great riches had accumulated in the last reign, and was now possessed by Madame Chevereux, his daughter.

As the Convent of the Assumption was known to receive no boarders but those of distinction, the admission of the young citizen was attended with some difficulty; but as Madame C. said—“What is money good for if it cannot do every thing one wishes?”

wishes? What signifies M. Chevereux's fine speeches? And what signifies the the millions and millions left by the Sieur D'Toit, the great jeweller, to his daughter, if Mademoiselle, his grand-daughter, could not keep the best company."

Madame C. was, I believe correct, for I could not any other way understand how the daughter of the Marquis de Courville, and Mademoiselle Chevereux, could have been fellow-boarders.

The girl, notwithstanding she had a silly look, and was utterly spoiled by the high respect paid her at home, was docile and good natured. Her dress was the most showy and expensive I ever saw, "and why, indeed," as Madame C. said, "should she not be equal to any Mademoiselle in the world—she was sure she was rich enough; people might talk of high blood and birth, but for her part, she had seen many a splendid Noble reduced to a starving condition, and many more she knew who, but for her husband's *charity* in lending them

his.

his money on *their* estates, would be in the same way, so why should not her Ninon be as accomplished as Mademoiselle D'Orleans, or any other person of quality?"

But however respectable riches and volubility might render the father of this new boarder, it afforded no protection to a woman who she introduced as governess.

I would not trust the morals of my children to such a companion, and resolved, if I could not effect her removal, to prevail on the Duchess to permit us to change the Convent.

I should not have succeeded in the former plan, if the Duke, who came to visit us, had not seen this governess by chance, and recognised in her the pretty Couthon, who presided over the mysteries of his first wife's toilette, and who afterwards happened to make a friend of a creditor, whose interest placed her with Madame Chevereux, as governess to the great heiress, her daughter.

As

As you will meet this Lady again, in the course of my memorandums, I hope you will recollect her.

The vivacity of Charlotte, which was terribly damped in a place where, as she said, there were so many motives for prayer, and so few for laughter, except in the short visits at the grate, soon made an acquaintance with the little citizen.

“The girl,” said she, one day, “is a downright simpleton—she who came here sinking under a load of finery, now thinks nothing wanting to the appearance of a gentlewoman but plain robes and clean hair: there she has been sitting these two days; sending away the fine lace, the diamonds, and roses, that tottered on her little head; ripping the double and treble rows of lace off her dresses; and discarding every thing that shines, merely that she may look as handsome as Adelaide, and as careless as Charlotte. I shall not, however, let her off so; her fine clothes afforded all my amusement in this dull place—I must re-dress her.

Accordingly

Accordingly Charlotte, who must laugh, and who indulged the giddy propensity sometimes too far, persuaded the poor girl that it was extremely against the inclination of both Adelaide and herself, they dressed so plain, that ornaments were her delight, and that Ninon never looked so pretty as when loaded with them.

Madame Chevereux, who had been petrified at the whim of discarding, in her daughter, and who indeed quite fatigued herself in journies to the *merchants du mode*, who served the Court, for cargoes of their most expensive ware, was charmed at sentiments so accordant with her own, and would have forced on Charlotte a moiety of her purchases, had she not hinted that, however gratifying to herself, it would be displeasing to me.

“ Now that is the most astonishing thing in the world,” cried Madame Chevereux ; “ your mamma, Miss, does not seem to want sense.”

Charlotte sighed, and shook her head.

“ Indeed,”

“ Indeed,” said Madame C. nodding her’s.

And so the business settled, that Charlotte’s mamma was a little absurd or so, she was permitted to adorn Ninon without sharing her fine things.

The poor little citizen had never met any thing so delightful as the life and humour of Charlotte, whose romances, void of truth and probability, she implicitly believed, whose manners she endeavoured to copy, and of whose company and conversation she never could be weary.

Madame Chevereux had sense enough to see that her daughter must be an infinite gainer in such society, and anticipating the wonders her riches would one day buy for Ninon, she endeavoured to get into the good graces of the *stupid mamma*, by the offer of a profusion of valuable presents.

I was at a loss to understand the meaning of the woman, but mollified by the humility of her looks, I condescended to reason with her on the absurdity of her conduct.

— You

“ You surely,” said I, “ could not mean to affront—.”

“ Affront! do people,” interrupted she; “ give away diamonds as an affront!”

I saw her glance at Charlotte, who, I perceived, with difficulty suppressed her laughter.

I comprehended nothing of what was meant by either; but, while disgusted at the mother, there was still something about the daughter which, spite of vulgar habits, coarse accent, and *mauvaise honte*, interested me; she was continually lounging into my room, and rendering me every little service, with a zeal that was too engaging and natural to be called officious; it was not only her ears but her eyes, and indeed every sense, that seemed to devour the instructions I gave my young friends in her presence; they differed, perhaps, a little from those she had received from Couthon, but, considering how young minds adhere to first impressions, I thought Ninon had faculties for great improvement: she did
not

not want for observation ; her intimacy with us soon taught her to distinguish between inborn gentility, and the second-hand airs of her late governess—with one she appeared fascinated, but blushed with shame at every allusion to the other. The polish her manners rapidly acquired intoxicated her fond mother ; and the pretty Couthon heard, with mortification, the comparison of Madame Chevereux, between “ some folks and some folks ;” but, too sensible of the advantages of a situation, where her chief employment was relating quality anecdotes, varied according to the dispositions of her auditors—that is to say, making them angels or devils, she quietly sunk into the fawning parasite, and, although she plainly perceived, Ninon was the butt of her dear friend—that was not her concern, though it was indeed so obvious as very often to excite my anger.

The criminal offered some very ingenious arguments by way of defence, and when

these failed, promised a reform, which seldom took place.

There was indeed no whim of Charlotte's, however absurd, that was not eagerly adopted by Ninon ; and the latent seeds of vanity, implanted by the Governess, were aided by a perfect hot-bed of the inventions of her new friend.

Ninon, who had been literally bloated with the indulgence of her parents, could not boast a trait of sensibility in her round fat face : her complexion indeed was fine ; her eyes, when they could be seen, pretty ; and the features, which were not rendered invisible by the two little boreas-looking cheeks, not bad.

Charlotte affected to be in raptures with the load of fat which was really a deformity, and appeared in such despair at a propensity we lately discovered in the poor little girl to grow tall, that she simply took every possible pains to prevent, what was in fact of the greatest advantage to her appearance.

But

But though you may be sure I was not acquainted with half the wanton tricks played by Charlotte for her own and Adelaide's amusement, the Duchess, who carried the peace of her heart in every lineament of her beautiful countenance, was highly diverted with the anecdotes with which my girl entertained her and the Marquise respecting Mademoiselle Chevereux, and the ridicule which was by these means attached to her character, amused them the more, as at the same period her father was become the golden calf of the vulgar, in the same degree as he was obnoxious to the Court; so much indeed were their curiosity excited, that they commissioned me to invite Madame Chevereux and her daughter to accompany us to the Palais de Verencourt, the first time the Duchess and her friend the Marquise slept at Paris.

Madame Chevereux's heart was for ever won by this condescension.—“ People of quality,” she observed, “ were not such

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very

very bad, good-for-nothing sort of bodies, especially Duchesses and Marquises."—For her part she liked them vastly, and wished, with all her heart, M. Chevereux would praise them in one of his speeches.

The suppers at the Palais de Verencourt were the most brilliant in Paris. Madame C. and her daughter were enchanted: the former, in right of her husband, was treated by the Polignacs, the Vandreuils, the Beuteuls, the De Courvilles, and many more of the same party, with a kind of mock respect which she had not penetration to detect. The Duchess was so good, the Duke so polite, the other ladies so attentive, and the Marquis, who did not arrive till late, so gallant, that no wonder the head of Madame C., loaded as it was with large heavy diamond ornaments, turned giddy; she said and did a thousand extravagant things, which amused every body, but at which nobody chose to laugh.

Charlotte, the unembarrassed friend of both the De Verencourts, made no scruple of
of

of acquainting them with the ridicule of her new friend's character. She had been the handmaid of the toilette both to Mademoiselle C. and her mamma, who indeed were as much dressed as any two rich citizens possibly could be. Their jewels and clothes literally stood an end; and even I, who did not know how much they owed to my daughter's humour, could not help laughing, at the same time that I pitied the two figures who were so conspicuously ridiculous.

Philip, who appeared to enjoy the ridicule of the great speaker's wife and daughter, and to applaud the witty ingenuity of Charlotte's contrivance, said carelessly—

“ My charming friend, you have now nothing to do but make this little thing believe herself an object of passion: suppose we give her a lover, my brother, for instance; would it be difficult, think you, to persuade her she is irresistible?”

“ Delightful !” cried Charlotte ; “ but it shall be *you*, not your brother, who is struck with her beautiful rotundity of face. Madam Chevereux will grow an inch taller within six hours after she hears it.”

“ With all my heart,” replied Philip, “ then let it be me ; but you forget,” he added with affected indifference, “ I am a mere Chevalier, a body without a head, for a Chevalier to be in love with Mademoiselle Chevereux is not an event worth telling our city friends ; but a Comte, Oh it will be too ridiculous !”

“ So it will, and I’ll set about it immediately,” answered Charlotte.

“ Bravo ! and I will half hide behind the curtain to watch the emotions of vanity, as you begin your operations.

Charlotte joined Mademoiselle Chevereux, and began that ungenerous practice on her credulity which was the source of unutterable distress to us all, and afforded a lesson to restrain the sallies of
unguarded

unguarded mirth at the expence of the innocent and unsuspecting, which should never be forgotten.

Philip contemplated with inward delight, from his half-concealed corner, the look of surprise, the flush of inflated vanity, the half doubtful, and half pleased attention; and he particularly noted the bashful, though tender glance of her eye towards the Comte, who, stationed at the back of the Marquise's chair, opposite to the Duchess, behind whom, in the same position, stood the blooming Adelaide, had struck daggers into his heart; as he beheld the eager eloquent gaze of his brother answered by volumes of tenderness. He turned from them with a malignant shrug to Mademoiselle Chevereux, whose willing ear was still engaged by the humourous Charlotte, and her flighty story of the how, when, and where the Comte did homage to her charms, which having described with as much pathos as the subject would admit,

she hastened to the saloon, to laugh with Philip.

“ You do but half your business,” said he, after extolling the adroitness of her management, and laughing immoderately, “ if you do not make the Comte address her.”

“ Oh, that’s impossible ; you see he is stationed opposite Adelaide, and as immoveable as a rock.”

“ Yes,” replied the Chevalier, grinding his teeth, “ I see that ; but you can easily remove Adelaide ; and suppose you hint to her that the little cit, unused to the company of people of fashion, fancies herself neglected by the Comte’s not addressing her, and so get her to bid him.”

“ How ! what is all this !” interrupted Charlotte, “ tell him, to tell her !—No, indeed, that is too much for my giddy head ; I undertake nothing but strait lines ; if you bring me into a curve, I am lost.”

“ How

“ How you talk, my dear Charlotte ! nothing can be more easy.”

“ For *you* perhaps, I could speak to the Comte, or call Adelaide away ; but as to all your long plot——”

“ Well, then return immediately, and leave the rest to me.”

The brothers had been this day on better terms than usual : they were on the eve of separation, and the Comte, as he saw Philip approach him, with a pleasant and inviting countenance, advanced to meet him, and taking hold of his arm, was following Adelaide and Charlotte.

“ No,” said the Chevalier, smiling, “ you have had your share of face-gazing this evening ; I must direct your attention for two minutes. You see that planet-struck demoiselle ?”

“ What, Mademoiselle Chevereux ?” answered the Comte. “ She does, indeed, look planet-struck. What can be the subject of her sublime contemplations ?”

“ That is what I want you to understand. I cannot forgive that wild Charlotte for bringing the poor thing so far out of her element ; she is really suffering under all the torture of conscious inferiority and fancied neglect.”

“ Neglect ! how can that be, when her vulgar mother is seated at the right hand of the Duchess ?”

“ True ; but the little demoiselle is not there, nor if she were, would that atone. She complains of being over looked by Adelaide, and you follow her example. Oh, she will have a list of injuries for the ear of the old citizen, who will carry them directly to the Marquis de Courville, and Adelaide will be finely lectured for your face-gazing.”

The Comte coloured with vexation at the idea of giving one uneasy sensation to Adelaide. He fixed his eyes on the little citizen, who, blushing, turned her's away.

“ There

“ There certainly is meaning in her looks,” said he ; “ yet I am sure Adelaide did not mean to hurt her. What can be done, will you join her ? ”

“ No.”—The Chevalier had not yet spoken to his general’s lady, Madame Largress : he could not go to his regiment without her commendations, and this the most fortunate moment to ask them, for she was counting her winnings into her card purse.

The Chevalier did not make more apparent haste to join Madame Largress, than the Comte to approach Mademoiselle Chevereux, who, ignorant of his attachment to Adelaide, was meditating on her brilliant conquest, as her oracle Charlotte had declared it, there could be no reason to doubt the truth of her assertion. To have precedence, rank, and title added to her own great wealth, by means of an union with so charming an object was delightful, and beyond what even her mother could hope. When, struck with

wonder and admiration as she ascended the grand staircase, and passed through suites of magnificent rooms into the superb one in which the company were assembled, when she gazed on the lofty mirrors, fixed from the floor to the ceiling, in silver embossed frames, and dazzled by the innumerable silver chandeliers, contrasted with the bright rose-coloured taffety against which they hung, the beautiful paintings, groups of elegant people, number of domestics richly clothed, serving refreshments in gold baskets and salvers, how far was she from imagining that it might be her lot to preside in such a house, and become familiar with such objects; but it was now actually possible, and she could scarce contain her transports, when she recollected it was also probable. She once more raised her eyes to steal another glance at a prospect so captivating, and saw the two brothers in earnest conversation and regarding her.

The one subject which wholly occupied her, she concluded also engrossed them : she crimsoned at the approach of the Comte, and trembled as he addressed her.

The sufferings of the girl's mind must, he thought, have been exquisite to occasion such strong emotions. Naturally polite and well-bred, he could be at no loss in addressing her with such elegant compliments as would best reassure and encourage her.

He sat down, and entered into conversation about the company, in a manner equally flattering and amusing to her who was a stranger to all but the party by whom she was invited.

There were Princes, Mareschals of France, titles, and ladies without number, whom he named. He afterwards pointed out the particular beauties of the paintings ; and the enraptured girl was lifted out of all mortal ken.

Madame C. who had delightedly watched a *tête-à-tête* which seemed to take up the whole

whole of the graceful Comte's attention, advanced to enjoy her share of the unexpected honour, and as soon as she understood how obliging he had been to her daughter, requested he would do her the same favour; but instead of listening in silence, like Ninon, the Comte was often thrown into confusion by the motion of her fan, and loud interrogatories of who that there gentleman in the star was? or this here lady without stays? till, having at length, as he hoped, quite reconciled Mademoiselle Chevereux to any supposed neglect, he was about to leave them, when the supper rooms were thrown open, and displayed such a scene of magnificence and grandeur, that the girl could only press her mother's hard hand, before the Duchess seated the vulgar citizens between Madame P. and the Marquise.

The young party, consisting of the juvenile friends of Adelaide and Charlotte, had a separate table; and as the Comte had volunteered into the service of the little
Ninon,

Ninon, he saw, with infinite vexation, he could not desert his post without a direct affront.

The situation of the little citizen was now truly amusing. So many concurring circumstances confirmed the wicked conspiracy of the Chevalier and Charlotte, that looking round in absolute certainty of a conquest so flattering, she enjoyed in silence that hilarity of youth which exhilarated the spirits of all present ; but as every thing, even a delightful supper at the Palais de Verencourt, must have a termination, Madame Chevereux at day-break was set down by the Marquis de Courville at her own house, her servants having been too awkward to bring her own carriage into the rank.

The time had now expired which was fixed for the residence of the young ladies in the Convent ; and the Chevalier, having received his commission, was preparing to join his regiment.

The

The Comte, informed of the arrangement so long designed, and no rival to embitter or interrupt the raptures of the hour, he was now every day allowed to devote to Adelaide, passed his time in a delirium of happiness.

The pride of the Marquis de Courville could not have received a higher gratification than such an establishment for his daughter; his assent, however, was merely passive, and he interfered no farther than to recommend, as the Comte wanted near a year of his majority, the continuance of Adelaide in the Convent, as the proper medium between living in the same family with her lover, and forfeiting her legacy.

“ And who, Marquis,” said the Duchess, “ would take advantage of that forfeiture, should it be made ? ”

“ The Church, my dear friend,” he answered, “ seldom fails to take every advantage within its pale; it is besides delicate, and in usage to keep a young lady *back* who is *known* to be *contracted*.”

The

The Duchess crimsoned at the “ keep back,” and “ contract.”

“ I have,” continued the Marquis, “ deprived myself of my daughter, more in compliance with the whim of my aunt, than in respect to the *trifling legacy*.”

By the bye, the Marquis said the thing that was *not*, the *trifle* as he chose to call, ten thousand louis d'ors, was no small object in the provision for a daughter, whose father's taste for pleasurable expences was barely gratified by all his own fortune, enlarged as it was by the emoluments of his office ; but he considered that the beauty and accomplishments which had long since consigned the *German abortion* to oblivion, could not fail to attract a great alliance in a Court where her parents were acknowledged favourites, and therefore, if the *trifling legacy* could have been *well managed*, he would have felt little regret about her not bearing the name of a man he could never cordially love.

The

The Duchess would have been as ill disposed to adopt any plan proposed by *him*, had not her own judgement, and that of the Duke, accorded with the propriety for which he was an advocate; besides, though Philip had not evinced the partiality of a lover for my wild Charlotte, the Duke and Duchess, who gave her credit for more attractions than perhaps she possessed, and him certainly, for more respect to their wishes than he ever merited, did not suspect one part of their plan less infallible than the other. The Comte adored Adelaide; Adelaide adored the Comte.

The tempers of Philip and Charlotte accounted for that difference in feeling, which to be sure was pretty visible; it was, however, right, if she was to be his wife, for her to remain secluded, while her lover was with his regiment.

Adelaide had no will but theirs; and and while the Comte continued to see her every day during the year that was destined to elapse before their marriage, he was
more

more satisfied than if her charms were exposed to general admiration ; so that, upon the whole, the two sufferers on the occasion were the Duchess and myself.

Charlotte is like her father in person ; and there were times when I thought in her whimsical fits she also shewed some small resemblance in disposition.

This idea rendered me a tenacious observer of her actions, and, as far as I could penetrate them, her thoughts.

Inclination always propelled me to the Duchess ; but I felt that the duty of a mother, at this critical period of a young woman's life, ought to be a first cause. Except the Duchess, who was almost stationary at Versailles, the world was a blank to me, and therefore in sacrificing pleasure to what I knew to be my duty, I only regretted the affectionate reluctance of the Duchess to lose a second year of unreserved friendship.

The first conversation between Adelaide and her lover, when he appeared at the grate,

grate, was of his attention to Ninon, which she said had highly pleased her father and mother, who charged her to cultivate the friendship of the little citizen, and to use her influence with him to persevere in the respect he had shewn her.

The Comte did not comprehend all the policy of Court intrigue ; but as he understood M. Chevereux was of great importance more ways than one, he was not surprised at the Marquis's injunction. He then accounted for his separating from Adelaide the evening before, by relating what passed with the Chevalier.

Charlotte repressed the inclination she felt to laugh, and remained silent till fifty minutes of the Comte's hour was expired, when she insisted that common politeness, as well as obedience to the commands of his future father, demanded that he should make his bow to the fair citizen.

It was in vain the Comte begged to be excused, they were, Charlotte said, enjoined to be civil to the poor rich girl ;
and

and a lay sister was bid to carry the Comte de Verencourt's compliments to Mademoiselle Chevereux, and requested to have the honour of paying his devoirs.

In then crept Ninon, more richly ornamented than even at the supper of the Palais de V. ; but so deeply impressed with respect for the charming man, who would one day be master of the fine house and grand appendages, of which she had not ceased to dream, and so conscious of her own littleness, notwithstanding the immense bags of her papa, that it was not without faltering, trembling, and even tears she answered the common civility the Comte prevailed on himself to pay her in the few moments before his hour expired, when he took his leave, and the ladies retired, Adelaide to wonder with me at what appeared a strange whim of her father's, and Charlotte to hear Ninon exhaust all her ideas on the subjects of rank, the Palais de Verencourt, the young Comte, and love.

Charlotte,

Charlotte, as agreed with the Chevalier, was his punctual correspondent ; and if she did not exaggerate, I much fear she did not soften the ridicule of their mischievous frolic.

The answers praised her wit and ingenuity, never failing to hint some new device to prolong such a delicious source of amusement ; but the sword was hanging over our heads by a single hair, that fully occupied us, without having recourse to fiction for amusement.

The abominable Minister, who, still retaining the privileges and emoluments of an Arch-bishop, was not ashamed to become the patron and zealot of a body of monsters glorying in atheism, was now on the point of feeling that nothing can prosper in such profane hands. The parliaments united in one interest, would not sanction the taxes. The King was totally without resources. No money remained in the treasury to pay the common expences of government, much less to satisfy the

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creditors,

creditors, or to afford any relief to the necessities of the Princes and the venal adherents of a Court, which exhibited a scene of pride and poverty. The country people, who heard that the example of the Bretons would be followed by the Parisians, feared to bring corn to the markets. The bold advocates of liberty and reform were ordered into confinement; and the scene of national deliberation surrounded with guards to apprehend persons whom in the impotency of ministerial rancour, were not identified to the officer entrusted with the commission. In this situation he demanded M. d'Eprenenil, Montsarbets, and Chevereux, and was answered by the general voice of the Assembly—"We are all d'Eprenenils, Montsarbets, and Chevereux!"

Dagualt, afraid to proceed, and ignorant how to retract, waited for orders, which at length recalled him and his three regiments to Versailles, followed by the hisses and imprecations of the populace to the Palace gates.

Our

Our Convent would not perhaps have had its internal peace disturbed by this commotion, had not the Duchess come to see us in the greatest consternation, lamenting, with floods of tears, the present disorder of the people, and threatened danger to the state.

On this occasion the young Comte joined his father at Versailles, and accepted a commission in the King's body guards; so here ended the daily felicity of poor Adelaide, and here also soon ended the joke of the penitent Charlotte.

The Duchess had not been gone ten minutes, when Madame Chevereux arrived to pacify Ninon. Dagault had returned from Versailles with orders to arrest the refractory members, who, rather than interrupt the debates of parliament, announced themselves, and were conducted to separate prisons.

As Ninon knew how firmly attached the De Verencourts were to the Court, it was not only the imprisonment of her father,
but

but the possible disappointment of all her gay hopes, which so much affected her, that though her mother protested, that the confinement of M. Chevereux was an event of which they had reason to be proud, the poor little girl was inconsolable, and obliged to be taken home.

Again our dear Duchess came to us, the obnoxious Minister was removed, and the joy of the people so turbulent, as to render her return to Versailles unpleasant and even dangerous.

During three days that this riotous joy continued, the acclamations of the public were heard in the remotest of our cells; and the Parisians, I believe, for the first time following the example of the English, forced the inhabitants to illuminate their windows on penalty of having them broken.

Martial law at length dispersed the populace for that day, at the expence of several lives; but they re-assembled the next in great fury and numbers round

the statue of Henry IV. attended by a vast crowd of women, who outraged every passenger.

Colonel du Bois, who had carried his zeal somewhat too far in clearing the *Pont Neuf* on the first day of the riot, was so much the declared object of revenge, that it was unsafe to send him again on the same unpopular duty; but, as in that particular quarter, riot, secretly encouraged by D'O. was fast advancing into rebellion, the Comte de V.'s offer to volunteer in the dangerous business was accepted with every compliment to his gallantry, and we had next day the happiness to congratulate our young hero on a magnanimity, courage, and humanity which for ever obliged the Court, and what was indeed now new, attracted the respect of the people, who returned to their own homes and occupations, without blood-shed on their parts, or undue concession on his, except the embraces of the women, and respecting the statue of their hero, could be so called.

The

The delight and enthusiasm with which Adelaide heard from crowds, who came to congratulate us on the credit attached to the Comte's first appearance on the stage of active life, is hardly to be conceived ; but you may judge with what pride the Duchess returned with him to Versailles.

Ninon still continued indisposed ; and her mother came to implore my leave for Charlotte to visit her, lamenting the illness and melancholy of her daughter as quite unaccountable, since M. Chevereux was already liberated.—“ And,” she continued with a significant twinkle of both her eyes, “ he has paid more than one secret visit at Versailles.”

As I felt very little interest in the concerns of this family, it was not till some months after I recollected the circumstance.

Ninon was not satisfied with *one* visit ; and as Charlotte always returned in high spirits to amuse us with descriptions of the people she saw at M. Chevereux's, as well

as of the great speaker himself, Adelaide was gratified by the equivocal obedience to her father's commands, while she was left at liberty to receive the Comte, free from the exact limitation of time, and to mingle the passion that so much occupied her, in conversations with *me*.

Ninon's health continuing too delicate to admit her return to the Convent, Adelaide, who fancied a coldness in her father towards the Comte, often recommended it to the latter to conciliate him by calling at M. Chevereux, which, though the vulgar familiarity of the mother, the increasing bashfulness of her daughter, and the air of consequence with which he was received by M. Chevereux was extremely disagreeable, he sometimes did.

Our second year was now nearly expired. The Comte's majority approached. The timid, modest, fond Adelaide shared in his transports; and Charlotte, wild with joy, anticipated the happiness she would be sure to participate with her dear Countess; but

but though no one could be less qualified to judge of public events than myself, confidential billets and interviews with the Duchess, filled me with such melancholy forebodings, that when I saw the amiable young creatures enumerating pleasures which seemed certain, I have often been more inclined to shed tears than rejoice. This, Lady N. you know is one of my weak prejudices; but you will see it was not altogether chimerical.

The return of Ninon indeed a little occupied my thoughts. She was extremely improved in her looks; but her manners appeared to me to be tinged with a sort of conscious bashful mystery, which, with the strictest attention I could not penetrate. This amused me; but I could not forget that the eighth day was closing since I heard from the Duchess.

I was expressing my surprise at a circumstance so unusual, when her confidential woman gave me a packet with such cautious secrecy, as before I opened it proved the

fatality of my forebodings. You receive the translated copy of the enclosures,

And believe me, with every regard, &c.

H. ST. HERMAN.

“ To Madame St. Herman.

“ I write to you, St. Herman, under such impressions of grief and astonishment, as almost takes from me the power to hold a pen. The Duke is well rewarded for the zeal and loyalty for which he and his ancestors have been so long remarked. What ! is it the Duke de Verencourt whose domestic peace must be sacrificed to a paltry dealer in money ? Yes, St. Herman, that is really the price of this fine speaker, this rich M. Chevereux. And the Marquis de Courville ; but in respect to him I cannot disappoint you. Know, then, Adelaide, our dear Adelaide, must be deserted, and for whom think you ?—The citizen's little daughter !

daughter ! Understand me, Madame, yes, this Mademoiselle Chevereux is to be the Comte's wife ! This man with the short blue nose, sore squinting eyes, long yellow teeth, and perpetual grin, gives a Countess to the House of de Verencourt ! I am not dealing in fiction ; no, the extreme anguish I feel is a proof of the reality.

“ Well, this man was closetted two hours : all the monied interest in the kingdom is at his command. The Duke was sent for. He also staid two hours ; but there was nothing extraordinary in that, for the confusion, distress, and ill management of the Court cannot, I think, be very distant from an anti-climax. You are not ignorant of the Duke's personal attachment to the family, nor, that on hearing of the horrid oath to which D'O. pretends to adhere, he was one of those few independent Nobles who swore to sacrifice themselves and their dearest interests to the King. When we left Languedoc, when we parted with our dear household gods to become inhabitants of this

babel, when the heir of our house stood forth the voluntary champion of our laws, the sacrifice was not complete.

“ No one pretends to command ; they entreat, they conjure, and the Duke is vanquished : one who but yesterday I heard scoffing at the coadjutors of this mighty citizen.—“ Yes,” said she, “ I shall have no objection to pay for the entertainment, on condition of your asking M. d’Empremenis permission.”—She sees my indignation ; she weeps ; and the Marquise, who dared not oppose the officious Marquis, implores my compassion.

“ This Mademoiselle Chevereux, with her unfortunate no-meaning face, is, it seems, desperately in love (the sublime creature !) with the Comte de Verencourt, who, they swear, is also in love with her ; but I think I know him.

“ And this Chevereux, too, quite a king of mobs, he has a flow of words, a tenacious memory, possesses immense riches, and is a creature of D’O. though he possesses no
regard

regard for any thing but liberty and reform.

“ If a counsellor of the Parliament were to be so treated, pasquinades, remonstrances, and even threats would be the consequence; but a man of high descent, the King’s friend, may be injured with impunity. The Marquis is now closetted: he is my evil genius. What is next to happen? Has M. Chevereux a son? and will he deign to make a Madame Chevereux, the younger, of our Adelaide?——Adieu, adieu,

“ JULIA DE V.”

BILLET II.

“ *To Madame St. Herman.*

“ Read the enclosed from the Minister to the Marquise. I am indisposed: it is too, too much.

“ JULIA DE V.”

“ To the Marquise de Courville.

“ I congratulate you, Madame, on the event of this day. We gain a powerful friend, who negotiates one immediate loan, and guarantees two others to an amount that we hope will save us. We lament the derangement of your family compact. The charming Adelaide should no doubt be a Countess, and the Comte is infinitely more graceful than the Chevalier. We enter into all their feelings; but how many sacrifices of pride and of peace has not been made to existing circumstances. Shall *we* then dare to complain? I am commanded to say the contract is approved for the espousals of the Chevalier de Verencourt with Mademoiselle de Courville.

“ Your Marquis entirely approves this arrangement, and entreats you to charge yourself with the communication to your daughter, whose obedience, under so charming

charming an instructress as Madame St. Herman, is not to be doubted,

“ I have the honour to be,

“ With the most perfect esteem,

“ Madame la Marquise,

“ Your very humble servant,

“ B——T——L.”

“ *The Duchess in continuation.*

“ Yes, my charming instructress, you see then how tenacious these people are of *our* happiness, for whom *we* sacrifice every thing; yes, I will say to you, my friend, what affection, and indeed duty, prevents my saying to the Duke. He is hurt, grieved, and indisposed. The Marquise is also confined. The Marquis's attachment continues steady to the dearest of all possible objects—*himself*. He affects to consider his daughter as too young and inexperienced to have imbibed impressions injurious to her peace. So, indeed,

hopes the Marquise. She has the best right to judge, for certainly she passed the age of her daughter without feeling she had a heart ; though the question has never been fairly stated whether her indifference proceeded from the want of an object. Forgive me, St. Herman, I am petulant, perhaps unjust ; but Adelaide, dear Adelaide, I know her ; and will not Charlotte's arch brow be overcast at losing the man whose *gaietie de cœur* was so exactly in unison with her own ? and who, though not quite so, every thing, as the Comte, could be infinitely agreeable ? and he, what will he, or, rather, what will he *not* say ? I talk to and of you, I cannot attend to the Comte, I dare not see, I dare not hear of him. The Duke is gone to Paris, he will visit you : my dearest Adelaide ! she lives in the bosom of my love. Write to me ; I can see none of you. Already has the odious Chevereux left his name with my Swiss—the new relation ! ! I can no more.

“ JULIA DE V.”

“ *The*

“ *The Marquis de Courville to the Duke de Verencourt.*

“ Nothing, I beseech you to believe, my dear Duke, can be more flattering to me than the honour of your alliance. It is impossible for any thing to be more obliging than the Duchess. Adelaïde is too happy in her protection.

“ This M. Chevereux and his daughter, however, come upon us a little *mala-propos*; but we are in a state of mortification. Our master, in the midst of his own cares, feels for our's. It is understood that the Chevalier de Verencourt stands deservedly high in the esteem of the Duchess; and that she intends him to succeed to the fortune of Monsieur de V. the last second branch of your house. The union of my daughter with your second son is proposed on those

terms which I heartily approve, and hope it will meet with your concurrence.

“ I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

“ CHARLES MARQUIS DE COURVILLE.”

“ *The Duke de Verencourt in answer.*

“ These are times, Marquis, when the service, I had almost said safety, of the best of masters ought to unite his devoted friends. The motive for qualifying with M. Chevereux, is, I understand, indispensable. He has the power to do much evil, and to disarm that power, is undoubtedly in effect, to accomplish good; but though perfectly sensible of this, I cannot be indifferent to the disappointment of my children.

“ My sons will, I trust, prove themselves worthy their progenitors: they have always been taught to hold their lives and estates

as a sacred trust for the service of their King, and will not shrink from the performance of duty at the hour of trial. In the hope of seeing the Comte de Verencourt the happy husband of your charming Adelaide, and my second son as happy with the amiable Charlotte St. Herman, I had reckoned on a peaceable close to my own existence; but though I feel a consolation even in my disappointment, what shall I say of my sons? When you receive this, I shall be on the road to Languedoc. I did not permit the Comte to visit the Convent; nor did I hint at the sacrifice which loyalty, honour, and the times enforced, till we had passed through Paris. As I dare not wound the Duchess with the account of his despair, you will not speak on the subject to the Marquise.

“ With respect to Philip, he has not less sense, or less honour than his brother; but his feeling delicacy and good nature are not quite so conspicuous, because it has been his duty hitherto, to guard a secret wish,

wish, which has not, however, been any secret to me. He would have married Charlotte St. Herman, and perhaps been eventually happy with her; but it is Adelaide he loves.

“ May we live, Marquis, to see better times. I salute the Marquise,

“ And am, &c. &c.”

These letters conclude the packet; but I soon after received the following:—

“ The Duke de Vreencourt to Madame St. Herman.

“ The Duchess announces a visit to you. I can neither conquer the regret of my son, nor describe my own. I knew not till this painful struggle how high spirited and resentful he could be. My
poor

poor Louis! his love for Adelaide, like mine for the Duchess, is indelible—it is become a part of himself; and when I contrast her beauty and elegance, adorned with those mental endowments to which our amiable St. Herman has paid such unwearied attention, with the little citizen, her vulgarity and immense riches, I feel I can neither see nor talk to you on a subject which seems inexplicable to myself: it is impossible to make you understand the imperious necessity that actuates me, and must have the same effect on the Comte.

“ From what unfortunate misrepresentation the report that a son of mine was attached to a daughter of M. Chevereux could be received, I am yet to learn; that *it is* received, is past doubt.

The despotic privilege (not the only one indeed with which our benignant Monarch has dispensed) of contracting the children of the Nobles, would not have been resumed to distress the most faithful of subjects; but I have pledged myself for my
son's

son's obedience—his life I cannot answer for.

“ Your lively Charlotte has, I know, too much sense as well as pride to have fancied an attachment where I have long seen none existed. Her establishment shall be my care. I might rejoice like a father in the probable happiness of one dear son, if I did not feel the absolute wretchedness of the other. We leave every thing respecting Adelaide to *you*. Madame Soubise declines interfering: she blames the *one* whose connections are certainly unfortunate, her friends unpopular and ill-chosen, all, except our poor Marquise, insatiate in their demands. This, at a time when the deficit in the public accounts distract the King and enrage the people, is very bad. But is this a time for censure? I am going to my province, to make every arrangement in my power to assist the King, and insure as much as possible a continuance of its present tranquillity.

“ Farewell, our best St. Herman,

“ DE V.”

“ *Madame*

“ Madame Soubise to Madame St. Herman.

“ You hear how we go on here ; but you, who are not of our world, can form no idea of the ease with which we manage the feelings of other people ; that is to say, as far as they are not in contact with our own interest or caprice, which indeed are not words of very different meaning. Thus the odious Marquis, with his one eye, settles it.—‘ The Comte would have adored Adelaide as a divinity ; the Chevalier will love her as a woman.’—‘ Certainly,’ I reply ; ‘ and a man has no occasion to adore his wife, when he is expected to be a slave to his mistress.’—This is our language at Versailles ; but when a man like the Duke de Verencourt is carrying his beloved son to his Castle in Languedoc, and vainly (for mark it will be in vain) endeavouring to change an authorised system of felicity, by shutting him out of
paradise,

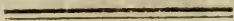
paradise, the sentiments of father and son may possibly differ. Seriously the mechanism of transposing the affections should be exacted at least twenty years before majority. "It is not given to the impassioned soul of man to execute a deed so fatal to its own repose;" but he will endeavour. At this period I rather suspect it will be a work of time; so we have only to hope M. Chevereux will be less expeditious in family settlements, than he has been in money concerns. The first loan is actually complete, and the second in train. We expect this will a little reconcile the Countess d'A——. Some of their debts are already liquidated; but if little Mademoiselle should be impatient, it will vastly derange us.

"A Duke of France must be careful how he ventures to disoblige a man of the people: that will be a pleasant era when we receive law from our vassals. The Duchess is ill; but I shall not go to her. The Marquise is also ill; neither shall I go to her.

If

If you are ill, I—— but no, I go to none of you. The happiness of two families are sacrificed to Quixote loyalty, of which one year will prove the futility ; but the misery will be permanent. My dear pretty Adelaide ! I hope she and I shall be with our ancestors. Charlotte need not die ; but for the young hero and Adelaide, I pray to God for them. Yes, one dares now pray, for the athiest is gone to be made a Cardinal, after having done his part towards making the King——what !——we shall see, that is, if poor Adelaide and I go not first to the place where the letter of a Prince cannot make Cardinals. May we all meet there.

“ F. S.”

*PACKET VI.*

THE letters subjoined to the last packet I had the honour to send you, Madam, explained our then situation.

Monsieur Chevereux, at this time between fifty and sixty years old, was bred to the law; but being taken up by the D. Aguillion party, as a shrewd sensible fellow, who could be rendered useful, was promoted to a former general in a distant province, where, as he added diligence in office, and regularity in accounts, to the habits of temperance and economy, his profits did not provoke the usual censure.

He

He was recalled, ostensibly to fill a small post near the Court, but in fact to be intrusted with such of the pecuniary affairs of the Countess du Barry, as she had grown wise enough to consider more safe in his management, than in that of her quondam brother-in-law; and the aggregate at the end of the first year proved the wisdom of her selection.

Monsieur Chevereux was supposed to manage the places and other advantages which were said to pass by way of bargain and sale through the influence of the Countess; and as this dexterous agency certainly merited renumeration, those who knew the man, would not doubt that his own ingenuity contrived to add considerable profits to the negociator, over and above the stated agreement.

But when at the death of the King, his patroness changed her apartments at the Palace for the gloom of a convent, M. Chevereux also, bidding adieu to his, returned to the city, no less anxious to
conceal

conceal than secure his riches ; and there were at that early period of his life few European banks in which he did not make a deposit, so that when he resumed the practice of the law, he was considered indeed as a man of good circumstances ; but his great riches were a profound secret.

Madame D'Etoit, the Christian sickly widow of a Jew diamond merchant, happening to find the immense wealth of her husband, to which she succeeded, too ponderous for her regulation, applied to Chevereux for assistance, which he granted with the more zeal, as he saw she had an only daughter, who she was on the point of leaving sole heiress to many bulses of rough diamonds, many sets ready for sale, and some millions in the French, Dutch, and English funds.

When Mademoiselle d'Etoit became Madame Chevereux, it was no longer a secret that her husband was one of the richest private subjects of France ; and as opulence is the specific for respect, nobody in their
line

line were more esteemed than Monsieur Chevereux and his family. He was elected a counsellor of the Parliament, where he soon distinguished himself by an eternal propensity to argumentative orations; and as soon as ill management on one hand, and discontent on the other began to distress government and inflame the people, he became a wonder of elocution.

No person could certainly inveigh with more point against corruption than him who had been its active agent; and, as usual, nobody vociferated with more vehemence against that system on which his own fortune had risen.

The criminal inability of some, and the more criminal venality of others, with the cabals similar in effect, though not exactly in cause, of the ministry who succeeded that in which he had served, furnished sufficient matter of declamation, since nothing was more clearly demonstrable in both than the want of money. While Neckar was in office, he was the object of M. Chevereux's

most eloquent attack ; and nothing but the disgrace of the unfortunate Swede could have changed invective to panegyric. The failure of the *cuisse de camps*, which seriously alarmed his colleagues, was a *tocsin* to him. His rage for speaking continued to increase till he reached the climax of ambition, by being included in the order for imprisonment with the two real patriots, D'Empremnuel and Mosambert, when he was followed to St. Margaret's by the blessings of the mob, and saluted at his return with general acclamation.

It was at this infatuating period his wife announced the important conquest of which Ninon, now, completely love-sick, had made her the confidant, and which gave a new turn to all the little orator's ideas.

If his opinion of the understanding of the daughter of the rich Jew was so moderate as to admit doubts of the fact, that which he entertained of the beauty and accomplishments of Ninon established it
past

past doubt ; and notwithstanding the little respect he secretly paid to the opinions of his wife, he could not help allowing that Ninon, the Countess, would be far superior to Ninon, the wife of the finest speaker in Parliament, and before he had slept on the business, his best consolation was, that it was not yet too late to exchange parties.

He could not have commenced a negotiation with the Court at a more fortunate period. Neckar, once the object of his violent abuse, since that of his as violent panegyric, succeeded the Archbishop in the ostensibility of a government, which, notwithstanding his popularity, was wholly without resource ; and as M. Chevereux found his wife's report confirmed by the little oracle his daughter, he knew what he had to do.

It has been observed, that however moderate the understanding of misers, in other respects they are decidedly the true judges of laying out money to the best advantage.

When Monsieur Chevereux appeared at the levee of the popular Minister, he got so completely into his confidence, and was introduced with such *eclat* among people by whom he was carressed, and despised, as led to two arrangements of equal importance. Chevereux engaged three large loans to the Minister, the first of which was made good in eight days; and the Marquis de B—t—I took on himself all the responsibility of the marriage of Mademoiselle Chevereux.

By what secret influence a plan so actually degrading to the family of De Verencourt was so highly supported, transpires only in part; and your Ladyship having before you all the information I could receive on the subject, I proceed with this remark.

Before M. Chevereux's negociation was completed, it was a known fact, that while the rapacity of some of those who called themselves the King's friends were the torment of every Minister, the Duke and
Duchess

Duchess de Verencourt had advanced very large sums out of their own private fortune in loans, to answer some secret exigences of the Court. It was therefore probably considered, that the great riches of the Chevereuxs would reanimate the popularity of the De Verencourts in the provinces of Languedoc and Burgundy, which, with contracted finances and exhausted coffers, might otherwise become too weak to defeat the machinations of the opposers of government of things; besides which, the well-known influence of Chevereux, among the monied men, was such as promised to serve the state, and highly credit the Minister.

The many advantages to be thus attained by a condescension of the Duke de Verencourt, which, in the opinion of the courtiers, among whom was the Marquis de Courville, amounted to a mere *bagatelle*, would not however, have prevailed, had it not been proposed the moment after the Duke had witnessed the affecting exclamation of his

King, when fresh circumstances occurring every hour, proved the instability of all his confidence.

“How wretched is my destiny!” said he; “I am surrounded by villains innumerable, and my friends, alas! on how few of them can I rely!”

The Duke immediately acceded to every proposition.—“My judgement,” said he, “is not convinced; but I offer a voluntary sacrifice to the repose of my *friend*.”

As to the Marquise, whether Adelaide married the Comte or the Chevalier, she would remain the beloved daughter of her dear Duchess. The Comte, indeed, she could easily believe, would regret a change so undesirable; but else, except in point of precedence, she more sincerely regretted the effect the change had on the Duchess, than the thing itself; and though the Marquise’s heart was exactly in the right place, out of the vortex of the Court, the possible disappointment of poor Charlotte never struck her.

But

But the Duchess, who could not forget the poignancy of her own distress in a situation extremely similar, and whose experience convinced her, that while the Comte continued amiable, Adelaide would not cease to adore him, was not to be consoled.

Whether a long period of tranquillity had weakened my mind, or whether, having passed the season, when it acquires force from youthful energies, I cannot ascertain, but after reading my letters I was carried indisposed, indeed hardly sensible, to bed, so totally enervated that it was with extreme difficulty I could persuade my two dear children to leave me to that composure of which I stood in such absolute need.

The instant they retired, I sent for the Abbe Riccobini, who I understood was in Paris, to fortify *my* mind by the piety of *his*, and to receive his advice in a dilemma that both distressed and embarrassed me.

The good man, not more composed than myself, said he had passed the preceding night after parting with the Duke, without rest, mourning over the ruin of hope.—“Till that hour, Madam,” said he, “I was not sensible how much I loved the Comte; till I saw him unhappy, I had not reflected how little he deserved to be so.”

The Duke wished the worthy man to be the companion of their journey to the province. He expected much from his influence; and flattered himself the arguments of a person so much respected would calm the transports of his son’s mind.

“The strength of man is in its wane,” said he, “when he approaches his seventieth year. I could lay down the remnant of my life, I could suffer torture, and give these white hairs to be torn from the roots for my dear Lord and his sons; but to see them unhappy, to consider that it has pleased Providence to visit them with a calamity which threatens to weaken the bond of affection

affection on one side, and duty on the other—to witness this, is what I cannot do !” and the tears flowed down his furrowed cheeks.—“ Yes,” continued the venerable Abbe, “ I have seen the Duke wrestling with sorrow ! Oh ! I was not deceived by the assumed fortitude and repressed tenderness, when he spoke daggers to his son ; and, after all, it is in vain : Louis de Verencourt may at length be subdued, he may give up his peace and promise obedience ; he may even marry the rich citizen’s daughter, and he may die ; but he will not cease to love Adelaide de Courville, and the hour, regard me, Madam, you who love the family as well, if that be possible, as myself, the hour that gives Adelaide to the Chevalier, will be fatal to one, if not both of my pupils.

Do you think, Lady N——, I did not shudder ?

“ Yes,” continued he, “ have I not seen the emanation of innocent affection, which I, mistaken old man, thought would

strew the path of life with flowers.—
‘ My children,’ said I, ‘ you will escape the thorns that murder peace. Alas! alas! how dared I reverse the fiat of the Almighty!— He has said, man is born to sorrow, and I in my dotage bid him be happy.’

As to consolation, who could want it more than himself? He would pray to God to direct and comfort us all; he would even pray, if the gentle creature did marry Philip de Verencourt.

“ Mark me, Madam,” said he, “ if Heaven permits this marriage, I will pray that it may be happy ; but I shall pray without hope.”

I found some relief in excessive weeping.—“ But what,” I asked, “ shall I say to Adelaide ?”

“ Say,” he replied, “ the truth ; leave nothing for hope to feed on, nothing for fear to magnify ; but in pity, only for the present conceal that she is designed for Philip. When you tell her the Comte no longer loves her, she will recollect the proofs that he can never cease to do so. When you

say he is to be the husband of Mademoiselle Chevereux, she will know it is an act of compulsion ; and thus consolation will rise out of despair. Delay not this cruel business ; but do not bid me witness her consternation, my weak frame already trembles."

Good man ! his weakness was indeed too visible ; he staggered to his carriage, and I passed a sleepless night, forming a variety of plans, without courage to fix on any.

My children, as now, and ever after I fondly called them, both entered my chamber several times before I affected to awake. I at last bid them sit down. Dear creatures ! their eyes were red : a fit of low spirits had mutually seized them ; they had been conjuring up God knows what of fancied calamity to happen when I am no more.

The Convent bell tolled for twelve o'clock vespers. It was was the usual hour of the Comte's visits. Adelaide had taken up one of Racine's tragedies. She started,

closed the book, and stepping to the glass, adjusted her hair.

“ Won’t you finish your book, Adelaide ? ”
—I hardly indeed knew what to say.

“ Not till the evening, mamma,” and she sat down with an air of expectation.—
“ The Comte, to be sure,” said she, half addressing us, “ cannot be so exact in his visits as before he accepted the commission in the King’s guards ; but when I have not seen him at five one day, he has been certain to be here before twelve the next, now it is the second quarter.”

I stammered, without any predetermination, “ that he was in the country.”

“ In the country without telling me ! Oh Charlotte ! then something *has* happened ! But say, mamma, is the Comte ill ? Has any accident——” She was interrupted.

Madame Chevereux, with flushed face and sparkling eyes, entered, leading Ninon, whose downcast looks, blushing cheeks, and repressed joy would, at a less interesting moment, have excited curiosity.

“ Won’t

“ Won’t you answer, mamma ? ” whispered Adelaide, impatient at so *mal-a-propos* a visit.

Alarmed lest Madame Chevereux should make discoveries, which, in her vulgar triumph, would be unbearable, I returned Adelaide’s whisper with assurance, that the Comte had accompanied the Duke some leagues from Paris.

She looked doubting.—“ On your honour, mamma ? ”

“ On my honour.”

Tears of joy filled her eyes, and her graceful curtsy, as she passed Madame Chevereux, was answered by a familiar nod, which the more struck me, as that person had a little improved since our first acquaintance; but she was now to be a riddle.

I was raised by the help of my pillows in a sitting posture, and in the attitude of bowing to Madame Chevereux, Charlotte advancing with her good-humoured *bon-jour*, when Madame C. first placing a chair for Ninon, and then seating herself, said—

“ Sit

“ Sit down, child ; don’t mind us, we permit you,” with such a droll imitation of dignified condescension, as set Charlotte into one of her violent fits of laughter.

“ I am come,” continued the citizen, “ to fetch my daughter home, to prepare for her marriage.”

Charlotte’s eyes were now stretched to their utmost limits.

“ And to invite you, Miss Charlotte, to go with us to our house. We shall remove to an hotel (Monsieur Chevereux is at this moment gone to purchase one), in a few days, so, Miss, though you may not like the city, our time will be short there, and you will have little reason to complain. As to your mamma, I am sure Mademoiselle Chevereux will always honour you both with her countenance.”

Charlotte’s astonishment again gave way to old habits.—“ Mademoiselle Chevereux’s countenance !” she repeated, “ Oh ! that is too ridiculous !” and, spite of all her efforts to repress it, the laugh would be heard.

“ You

“ You are amused, Miss Charlotte,” continued Madame C. in an elevated tone ;
“ but you, Madame, you understand me.”

I bowed.

“ You are sensible of the honour we confer on your daughter ?”

“ Perfectly.”

My “ perfectly” and submissive tone, put a sudden stop to the mirth of my daughter.

“ We shall shew the Court ladies we understand a few things, though we *are* citizens. These diamonds, Madame, what do you think of them ?”

“ Very fine indeed.”

“ Yes, they are tolerable, I believe ; my papa bought them of Madame Victoire before she took the veil : they are the same the King, her father, presented to her on the first marriage of the Dauphine ; they will be reset. These pearls, pray examine them ; they are of great value.”

“ Very beautiful.”

“ And

“ And these bracelets, I mean them to clasp with two miniatures; one of M. Chevereux, the other of the Comte de Verencourt.”

This association of pictures, the little ugly counsellor and handsome Comte de Verencourt, in the same bracelets, would have been too much for Charlotte, had she not been restrained by my serious, and perhaps grieved look.

“ We, M. Chevereux, and myself, shall have a house at Versailles. The King will be glad, and indeed he has reason, to see *us* at Court. I shall wish to be always near my son the Comte, and my daughter the Countess.”

Charlotte started and changed colour.

“ Well, Madame, you will allow *your* daughter to have the honour of attending the daughter of Monsieur Chevereux.”

Too well acquainted with pretensions that lifted vulgarity into arrogance, I was embarrassed by a request, if indeed it
might

might not be rather called a command, which I was at a loss how to deny, but to which, in my present situation in respect to Adelaide, it was impossible to accede. I was beginning an apology.

“Mighty well, Madame, vastly well indeed, *you* will not condescend to let your daughter visit Mademoiselle Chevereux! this is admirable!—The citizen’s daughter is not a patroness fit for Miss St. Herman!—a poor dependant on the generosity of friends, scorns the heiress of the rich M. Chevereux!—very well, we shall see!”

“And what will the wife of the rich M. Chevereux see?” demanded Charlotte, reddening.

“She will see you, Miss, glad to court the condescension you now refuse.”

“Make yourself easy, Madame,” said my spirited girl, “that is what you will never see.”

The poor proud woman arose, and motioned to lead her daughter away.

Ninon,

Ninon, who had not yet spoken, took Charlotte's hand, and in a modest persuasive tone, begged to be favoured with her company.—“ I am too conscious,” said she, blushing, “ of my inability to conduct myself properly in the new character I am to assume; and as it will be to the honour of the family so dear to *you*, that the little citizen should not degrade——”

“ *Ma foi!*” exclaimed her mother, “ degrade!—the rich M. Chevereux's daughter degrade! Of what are you speaking? What are the Nobles to us citizens? Are they not, as your honoured papa said in the hall of justice, locusts who devour the honey which the citizen bees are at the trouble to gather? Degrade! no, Miss,” turning fiercely to Charlotte, “ no, we shall carry more wealth into the De Verencourt family than any Duchess of their order ever possessed. Degrade! Ninon, you surprise me! How is it possible a young lady to whom the Duke de O. offers
his

his son can degrade any other Duke? The Minister, Miss, the Minister thinks M. Chevereux is doing his friend the Duke de Verencourt honour; and is it for you, the *protégée* of the family, to give yourself airs?"

"Comprehend *me*, however," said Mademoiselle Chevereux, drying the tears her mother's harshness to one she so much loved occasioned, "the event you have so often foretold, and which is too flattering to me, has received the sanction of the King, and of the Duke de Verencourt, I implore you, my dear Charlotte, let me owe to your friendship that confidence I shall want in myself."

"You are too humble, child," said Madame Chevereux; "you do not enough consider your own value."

"Yes, my dear mamma," replied she with a pleasing *naïvete*, I have well considered that one sincere friend is invaluable. Dear Charlotte, let me not lose you; I
will

will do every thing you bid me ; pray do not forsake your little Ninon."

" You forget, Mademoiselle," answered Charlotte with a cold gravity, " the circumstance which Madame, your mamma, so opportunely recollects, that we are the indigent *protégées* of the Duchess de Verencourt, and cannot decide on any thing without first obtaining her permission."

The effervescence of Madame Chevereux being a little evaporated by an answer which did not imply a negative to what was in reality, as much her own secret wish, as it was her daughter's avowed one, she condescended to think Miss St. Herman right in respecting the sentiments of her patroness ; and having ten million of things to order and to buy, the whole city to acquaint with the important news that the daughter of M. Chevereux, and the grand-daughter of M. d'Etoit, the rich jeweller, would be the wife of a Noble, she left us, and proceeded to a coach, which she declared was a shabby vehicle,

vehicle, not fit to receive her august person. The laquais, too, were the most awkward creatures in the world ; and she wondered how she had been able to bear them so long.

Ninon in the meantime purposely lingered to offer the *amende* of humility for the insult of arrogance : she embraced Charlotte, and bending her knees, pressed my hand to her lips.

“ I am going,” said she “ to live in a Palace, to be presented at Court, to be married to the most charming man in the world, whom I love extremely ; but my heart is heavy, it informs me that the hours I have passed in the presence of Madame St. Herman, and in the society of her elegant daughters, are not only the most profitable, but the most happy of my life.”

My eyes followed the steps of this interesting girl, and I was going to remark what appeared to me extraordinary traits in her character, when I beheld Charlotte
pale

pale and fixed as marble. I shrieked for help. The nuns came to my chamber; but it was long before we could animate the warm statue. Her eyes were set in a glare of wild astonishment; her teeth closed, nor could we move her from the spot on which she stood, till convulsion, forced by the volatiles we applied, restored her faculties to re-action.

Adelaide, who had grown with Charlotte like “two cherries on a stalk,” whose principles, temper, and habits differed only as the chords in music to produce the sweetest harmony, flew to the assistance of her adopted sister.

“Oh, mamma!” cried Charlotte as soon as relieved by a flood of tears, “explain this horrid enigma. What did that vulgar woman mean?—What did her simple daughter say? She, Ninon, marry the Comte de Verencourt! What worse than madness was it they uttered? The King—the Duke—M. Chevereux—if they had indeed a meaning, what a miserable wretch is your Charlotte!”

“How,

“How miserable, Charlotte?” I replied, alarmed at an emotion which I suspected could only relate to the Chevalier; but in that instant the bloodless face and eager eyes of the trembling Adelaide attracted all our tenderness and sympathy.

Passing an arm round each of the anxious, astonished, and agitated girls, I embraced them, and mingled tears with Charlotte; for Adelaide, though she leaned her head on my bosom, heaved no sigh, shed no tear. In this situation we were found by the Duchess.

“Adelaide, my own Adelaide!” said the amiable woman, folding her arms round her, “why are you thus?” Oh, do not rend my heart!—be composed my love! At little more than your age, St. Herman will tell you how I loved, and how I was deceived. The object of my adoration, unworthy as he really was, appeared to me possessed of every virtue and of every grace; but in the height of my delirium he gave himself to another in a manner
that

that lost my esteem, and deprived me of my own self-respect. How much less unhappy are you ! The Comte de Verencourt is still himself ; he will always be worthy your friendship."

" I think so," said the still pale and panting Adelaide.

" You may be sure of it," returned the Duchess, pressing with her lips the cold forehead that reclined on her shoulder.

" But what does it all mean ? Let me know the worst. I have not seen the Comte these two days : he was not here at five yesterday, nor at twelve to-day. This is not common. Madame St. Herman says he is on business with the Duke ; but what business has the Comte that should prevent his bidding Adelaide not expect him at his usual hour ? This is not well. Charlotte is overwhelmed with grief ; it indeed threw her into a strange fit ; she is just recovered, but you see despair in her eyes ; and the placid countenance of Madame St. Herman is distorted with anguish. You weep too, you

you who own you are the happiest of women. What does all this mean?—is it for yourselves, for the country, or for me you are thus? Oh, you cannot understand the agony your silence inflicts! You indeed know me better than I know myself; but I feel I should not sink under common misfortunes.”

“ Only tell me,” said Charlotte starting wildly, “ is it in the possible order of events that the Comte de Verencourt has abandoned Adelaide? that he is to marry the daughter of M. Chevereux?”

“ You have not then told them?” said the Duchess.

“ There is then *that* to tell which will undo some of us,” whispered Adelaide to Charlotte.

“ Answer me, mamma,” cried my daughter, “ save me from distraction!” and she looked, as well as spoke, in earnest.

“ The Comte de Verencourt,” said I, very poorly affecting composure, “ does

not abandon Adelaide ; but the King's command, the—the interest of the state——”

“ Gives him to Ninon ! Say no more, say no more ; wicked, wicked, thoughtless wretch ! it is me, it is me, it is Charlotte St. Herman, by whom the Comte de Verencourt and her dear Adelaide is undone !”

My poor girl's feelings are like her spirits : she was carried to her chamber in hysterics, attended by the good nuns. I was totally unable to follow.

Adelaide, still pale and trembling, affected a proud disdain of any cause, that could produce such an effect.

“ The Comte,” said she, “ is undoubtedly right ; he will be happy. Who that are so rich can be otherwise ? The King too, he condescends to provide for a daughter of Madame Chevereux. Ah ! what an addition to the Court will this same little Comtesse make, and the tall mamma ! Upon my honour, I am transported with joy.”

Her

Her pale cheeks became for a moment flushed; and tears, notwithstanding her joy, streamed from her eyes.

The Duchess knew the human heart too well to be deceived by her apparent tranquillity. The hysterics of Charlotte were infinitely less alarming: they had already ceased; but Adelaide still continued talking like a heroine, and looking like a ghost, till her pulse became extremely unequal, her eyes heavy, and the conversation even of her best friends seemed to afford neither consolation or amusement; yet she had very little fever. The Duchess removed us all to the Palais; and you, Lady N. will conceive our situation when it was hinted a mental derangement would probably become fixed.

Charlotte never quitted her; and when I blended the command of a mother with the entreaty of a friend, to prevail on her sometimes to quit the apartment, she would throw herself at my feet, tear her hair, beat

her bosom, and implore me with sobs and tears, not to prevent her staying with her murdered Adelaide.

My thoughts again recurred to Philip, with renewed suspicion that my poor girl was really attached to him, and I indeed began to fear that *her* reason was also affected; for to what else could I attribute these violent self-accusations? and how little could I suspect what had really happened?

You will recur, my dear Lady N. in this place to the jest, which the artful contrivance of the Chevalier, played on the poor Ninon by my inconsiderate Charlotte. The effect of that cruel jest, and the arts suggested by him, and executed by her, to keep the poor girl in the delirium of vanity, had perhaps proceeded further than he could have originally intended, although when it opened the more than hoped-for consequences, it was not likely he should wish to recede.

Independent

Independent of his rank, which was no small allurements to so simple a creature as Ninon, the Comte was too handsome and too amiable to be constantly described as her passionate admirer, without raising in her bosom a real flame, in return for the fictitious one, which, under the tuition of the Chevalier, Charlotte ceased not to urge, without an idea that she was feeding any passion but vanity, till this fatal explanation: who, indeed, could suspect, that the peace of the young lady, or the pride of the old one, could impel them to such lengths on the mere rodомontade authority of a thoughtless girl?

Charlotte was, however, smarting severely under a correction both of warning and punishment. She had now no heart but for Adelaide, no wish but for her recovery, nor apprehension but for her safety. If it was in vain that she pleaded the innocence of her intentions to me, it was also in vain that I exhausted my strength and spirits,

in painting to her the consequences of her conduct.

“ Ah, my child !” said I, “ when you became an unfeeling jester, you knew neither the danger nor hatred attached to the character.”

“ I feel it now, however,” answered she, “ nor is the severe displeasure of the best of mothers wanting to make me detest myself ; but spare me, dear mamma, my own life and reason depend on Adelaide’s. I cannot face any of the family, if you expose my miserable folly to them.”

“ I shall be very cautious,” I replied, “ how I add to the present distress of our benefactors ; but the first occasion, where explanations are necessary to them in any one sense, either as elucidation, alleviation, or remedy, be assured I shall not forfeit my own integrity, or outrage the gratitude of my own principles by concealing the deformity of your’s. What have you not to answer for ? Look at your friend, the child of my friends.—

“ Where

“ Where now is the rosy tincture of her lips ?

“ The smile that grace ineffable diffused ?

“ The glances that smote the soul with silent wonder ?

“ The voice that sooth’d the anguish of disease,

“ And held attention captive ?—All sunk, all lost !”

“ Oh, my dearest mother ! pity and forgive.”

“ For me, my child, to pity, if not forgive, the error of an only daughter is easy ; but with respect to this dear victim——”

“ Oh, my dear mamma !” interrupted Charlotte, “ do not in pity to me, do not call Adelaide a victim. Do as you please in every other respect, but let me hope she will be among the happy, what she is among the virtuous and beautiful, supereminent. I know her gentle heart ; alas ! it will never cease to be devoted to the Comte ; and the conviction that *he* is not to blame will be her permanent consolation. She will forgive her poor Charlotte, a levity that proves the honour of her lover. To her I

dare confess all my thoughtless errors, even that which has destroyed her dearest hope ; yes, for does *she* not know the heart that sorrowfully bends to correction, lamenting, Oh how sincerely ! that it cannot recall, as well as repent ?”

The poor girl’s mind was not culpable, it was ingenuous, susceptible, and affectionate ; never had it suggested a willing offence to human being ; and now that self-accused of causing misery to her friends, she became degraded in her own estimation.”

If I am anxious to extenuate the faults of my daughter, it is a mother I address, and she will feel my claims to forgiveness.

It was at this period, rather late you will allow, that the Marquis de Courville felt himself a father. Adelaide’s indisposition affected both her beauty and strength ; and the despair of her mother, which carried her from Versailles, added to his self-reproach, for the neglect of a daughter, of
whom

whom the greatest monarch might be proud ; and, if any thing could add to his remorse, it would have been the consciousness, that in every part of the business he had been himself a principal actor. His time was either passed alone in his own closet, or in journeying to and from Paris. At the latter place, however, his stay was momentary : the beauty of the once charming object of his pride, though but lately that of his love, was blighted. She took no nourishment but what was forced ; gave no symptoms of recollecting any of her dearest friends, of which number her own father had not hitherto wished to consider himself ; and her complexion was entirely changed by an universal jaundice. The Marquis daily snatched one look, and then retired, glad to indulge that relief himself which he had often ridiculed as unmanly in others ; but neither the Duchess or her mother left the chamber of Adelaide.

Charlotte was sinking under a wounded conscience and exhausted strength, and I too was a *mother*.

Among all the ills which man is fated to endure, we find the actual breaking of the heart that which most seldom occurs. Grief is the parent of many diseases, and by these no doubt some are brought to a premature end ; but it must be a singular case indeed where grief, without some auxiliary from disease, occasions immediate dissolution ; it at least did not happen to Adelaide.

To our unspeakable joy the jaundice disappeared. She regained some natural appetite ; and her complexion by degrees returned to its native delicate tints. As her health was the barometer of Charlotte's, she also resumed her office of nurse. But with the return to convalescence, we observed no omen of mental recovery.

Melancholy mark'd her for its own.

She was indeed no longer insensible ; she answered "yes" and "no ;" and when Charlotte happened to leave the apartment, her eyes were fixed on the door till her return. But she

she entered into no conversation, shewed no interest in the common daily occurrences, let her women dress her as they pleased, arose mechanically when Charlotte did, and retired at the same hour, was led to the carriage to air, and helped out on returning without seeming to regard or even be sensible of any thing. Twice we took her to Versailles, without perceiving the smallest alteration.

The illness of Adelaide was spoken of; but as we were extremely solicitous to conceal the derangement which we feared was inevitable, that did not transpire.

You will not wonder while shut up month after month with our dear invalid, that we were little interested in public events.

The Duchess waited the return of the Duke with great anxiety; while the Marquis and Marquise took the complexion of the Court, and were seldom seen to smile.

The King conceded; but concessions availed him nothing. The Comte *rendue*

au roi, so unprecedently and perhaps wantonly exposed to the people during the popular Minister's former administration, was again remembered at his return ; and the refractory disposition of the Parliament kept the kingdom in such commotion, that the secret emigration of persons and property was already began, which proved eventually fatal to the King and the country.

Madame Soubise surprised us one morning in her travelling dress. She came to take leave, having obtained permission of the Queen to try the efficacy of the English baths, for the removal of some complaint with which she was afflicted.

I have seldom met a mind in either sex better informed, more animated, or endowed with more judgement and penetration than this amiable woman. Few debates either of the Nobles or Parliament, which in fact were the real objects that fermented the people, escaped her serious examination. She loved the King ; but was tinctured so
strongly

strongly with the French constitutional hatred of the Austrians, that she not only viewed the actions of the Queen with the eye of prejudice, but put more confidence in the report of her enemies than was consistent with her natural candour: and perhaps our Duchess was also at this period a little actuated by similar impressions, which indeed was accounted for by the attachment and intimate connection that subsisted between her and the Madames, aunts to the King, who, though doating on their nephew, entered into all the vulgar prejudices against his wife.

Madame Soubise, after every argument of friendship to persuade the Duchess to follow her example had failed, adduced her sentiments on the political state of France, maintaining what I then thought a most improbable thesis, foretelling events too terrible, as we considered them, ever to happen; and after bewailing with tears the misery she foresaw, finding her arguments grieved and terrified, without convincing, she took, what
her

her heart, she said, told her would be, a last leave of the Duchess, and left us as much affected as herself.

The Duke was still detained in Languedoc by the critical situation of the neighbouring provinces, which menaced to disturb the peace of his own, by the arrangement of his private affairs, and by the situation of his son.

Adelaide's health mended every day ; but her derangement seemed to be fixed. The Duchess determined on carrying us to her *château* ; and she requested the Marquise to accompany us.

The defection of the courtiers were however already so visible, and the increasing embarrassment of the Court so generally understood, that although the object was to accompany her interesting daughter, and though Versailles was now the most dismal and gloomy of all places, the Marquise could not prevail on herself to leave it.

The Marquis's violent grief, though subsiding, had somewhat bettered his heart. He was attached to the King by hereditary sentiments, by habit, and by interest. He professed no heroism; but had made up his mind, if the worst happened, to die, as he had lived, in the service and defence of his Prince. These were the sentiments which sanctioned the transaction that had been so fatal to his daughter; and Chevereux, though his connection with the Court remained a profound secret to his political friends, had been of no small private service to himself; so he continued a fixture in a circle which yet afforded him great amusement, though he could not witness the departure of his almost inanimate daughter without a feeling of the most painful nature. But he returned to the old sentiment, "that the duty of to-day is our only task, that of to-morrow is not yet come."

The return of the Duchess and her suite to her *chateau* in such afflicting circumstances,

stances, revived those sorrows which time had softened; for the invaluable mistress of that delightful mansion, her virtue and her tenderness, rushed on us all. But what particularly affected us was a recollection of poor Adelaide, who had been brought twenty leagues without taking the smallest notice, and who, on our approach to the *chateau*, manifested no sign of animation, at returning to the home of her childhood; but on the moment of entering the saloon, she fixed her eyes on a reading chair, in which Madame de Verencourt usually sat, and then run to her chamber, looked on and under the bed, searched the closets, and at length sat down with such a look, I shall never forget it! She the next moment relapsed into torpidity, and no more flashes of returning reason enlivened the gloom that even in this terrestrial paradise enveloped us.

Charlotte, my poor Charlotte, wandered about, equally unable to bear the sight of Adelaide, and the increased tenderness of
the

the Duchess. Her penitence and her secret sufferings had extorted a full pardon from me.—“ But when,” she cried, shedding the most bitter tears on my bosom, “ shall I forgive myself ?”

As we had declined all visits at Paris on account of the secrecy we wished to observe on the nature of Adelaide’s malady, Ninon was not excepted from a rule so general, neither would Charlotte temporise in respect to one moment’s separation from her friend, so that the business of mollifying was left to the Marquis, who, an adept in the maxim that “ sacrifices the weak to the strong,” amused both father and daughter with fables of his own invention ; and poor Ninon, not having had the small-pox, was given to understand it had raged in the family of the Duchess. Meantime neither her name nor that of the Comte had been mentioned in the hearing of our dear insensible.

The Duke was not more tranquil in his province, where, though yet no open disturbance

disturbance had taken place, the friends of peace and good order were kept in constant alarm; and the distraction of the Comte inflicted pangs on his parental heart the more distressing, as the cause appeared to be without remedy.

The Duke, with all the enthusiasm of loyal zeal, explained the motives for what had been done. He adverted with the greatest feeling to the melancholy derangement of the King's affairs, to the dangerous licentiousness of his enemies, and to that sacred duty, now absolutely imposed on every loyal subject, of rallying round the throne, to defend the King and the laws with their lives and fortunes, by a general sacrifice of private interest to the public good.

He produced documents for so many large sums, the voluntary offers of loyal zeal, as left his own coffers nearly empty. He entered into the state of the provinces, their own in particular, where it required no sophistry to prove, that the dispensing
sums

sums of money was now actually necessary to the subjugation of the common, and particularly discontented people; and gave certain proof that in the present state of affairs, they possessed no resources for that purpose; finally, he adverted with a warmth that was foreign to his own sentiments, to the powers, which a marriage with so great an heiress as Mademoiselle Chevereux, would put into their hands for the best of purposes; and he even hinted at the glory that must be for ever attached to the character of those, who were in any degree the saviours of their country.

The Comte was immoveable: to the turbulence of the times, and the embarrassments of the Court, he cheerfully resigned all that was his, of the gifts of fortune; and he would also devote the best service of his life to the defence of the King and his family, to whom, next to his dear and respected father, they were most sacredly due. Him indeed who was found tardy in such a cause, deserved not the name of
man;

man ; but him who could violate the faith and honour pledged to a virtuous woman, was a reptile, below contempt. For his own part, though “ amid the wreck of matter and the crush of worlds,” Adelaide de Courville’s empire over his heart would remain entire : yet in the very moment of receiving her beloved hand at the altar, if the *tocsin* of rebellion sounded, he knew he could tear himself from her arms, and rush to a post of duty where certain death would meet him. But to marry another, to carry prostituted vows to the altar of his maker, to forego the converse in which he had so often “ forgot all times, all seasons and their change,” to degrade himself by deserting Adelaide, to exist, to breathe the pure air, while she thought him unworthy, while she believed his sordid soul had exchanged the pride, the delight of being beloved by her, for mean, mercenary craft.—No ! the Duke was his father, the best of fathers : he might deprive him of fortune, liberty, life—these were his own gifts,

gifts, and should be at his devotion ; but his honour and his love, once sanctioned by duty, were his own inviolable prerogative. They should not be tainted by the degrading change that was demanded in his sentiments ; nor should the most bitter extremity ever force him to relinquish the object of his first and fondest attachment.

The Duke was sick at heart : he too longed for that sweet converse that made him forget “ all times, &c.” but he was not at liberty to return, and he respected the firmness of his son, at the same moment that he considered it his sacred duty to combat the very sentiments he most admired. He warned the great Chevalier to avoid any private conversation with the Comte on the subject of family concerns, though without suspicion that he was acquainted with the arrangement in respect to himself.

The Chevalier was not, however, entirely ignorant of what was passing. The reproaches of Charlotte, renewed with every unfavourable

unfavourable turn of Adelaide's disorder, convinced him that some part at least of his plot had succeeded.

But on his arrival at the Castle, a mutual reserve took place. The Duke, with the advice of the Abbe, had concealed from his son that he was destined for her who they well knew he loved, concluding it would be as difficult for him to repress his transports, as for the Comte to endure them ; and on his part, he had pre-resolved to be his own secret keeper.

The Duke had this evening a conversation with the Comte, in which he adverted to insurrections now common in all parts of the kingdom. He produced letters from Versailles, picturing the new grievances and new dangers ; and he also, having kissed the seal, shewed him one from the Duchess, in which she mingled fear for his safety, with impatience for his return, adding a hint the Comte could not misunderstand.—“ The more prompt your private arrangements, the sooner
all

all will be well with us. At present!" The Duke hoped an effect from the letter contrary to what happened.

The Comte, for the first time in his life, departed from respect to the King, and regard for the feelings of his father. The former he accused of tyranny, to which, however, on his knees he swore he would not be a victim; and the latter of cruelty, which he never, never should forget or forgive. To these ravings succeeded a paroxysm of grief: he wept, tore his hair, and flew in agony to his closet, whither soon the trembling Abbe followed.

Patient resignation, meek forbearance, and mild confidence animated the pale countenance of the venerable Riccobini: the effervescence of religious duty shone in his placid eye. He came to persuade, but he could only weep—to argue against his own feelings, but he failed in the attempt—to implore, but his prayer was rejected. He returned to the Duke, to signify his ill success, who then resolved to make one effort

effort on behalf of his beloved heir. He wrote an account of what had passed to the Marquis de Courville, requesting his good offices, but leaving to himself how to apply them.

“As soon as your affairs in the province are finished, bring the Comte to Versailles,” was the answer.

But this was a business of more vexation, time, and danger, than was foreseen. The anarchy that was now raging through all France, broke out in Languedoc, and confusion spread every where.

The Nobles, at the head of whom was the Duke de Verencourt, had no longer power to restrain, much less subjugate the commons while encouraged by private emissaries, who supported the idle, humoured the refractory, and inflamed the disaffected.

“We are men!” said they proudly, at the instant they preserved nothing of manhood but the form.

The public voice followed those heroes. They convoked an assembly, from whence
they

they at first excluded the Nobility ; but on the Duke de Verencourt's appearing, neither those who still revered his virtues, nor those who had been accustomed to respect his power, could immediately divest themselves of rooted habits. The doors were thrown open. The Nobles were, however, only permitted to speak as individuals, which of course left them in the minority.

This affair, vexatious in the present, and awful in the future, had more effect on the Comte than all that had been urged in proof of the danger of the King and the nation.

The Duke did not lose the favourable moment ; he renewed his arguments, his entreaties, his commands ; but they produced nothing in favour of the Chevereux.

The Comte was ready to expose his life to the most imminent danger. Had he indeed a thousand lives, he would sacrifice them all in the same cause ; but to live with dishonour was what he would not do.

During this tedious interval the Duke's health suffered by fatigue, by vexation, and by the separation from her who was the solace of his existence.

The Duchess continued an hopeless attendant on our poor Adelaide, subject to continual alarms, and deprived of all consolation, till the Duke, abandoning a province ungratefully forgetful of all his former benefits, returned to Versailles. The reports he had to make, and consultations on the measures to be pursued, prevented his joining us; he therefore entreated the Duchess to come to him.

Our separation was solemn and affecting; we embraced each other with as much tenderness and regret, as if we already foreboded a final parting.

The meeting of the Duke and Duchess dissipated half his cares, notwithstanding the unpleasant news he had to tell her; and Julia's first embrace suggested an apology for his son's obstinacy.

The Comte had requested to be left at the Castle.—“ Every criminal,” said he with a mixture of gravity and indignation, “ is allowed time to prepare for his execution. I am no criminal, yet it seems I must submit to the torture : give me, however, time.”

The Duke consented to his request.—“ Take your own time, my dear Comte,” said he, “ my son cannot but be a patriot. Only let me warn you, if you perceive the disaffection among our own vassals, or in our domestic establishment, do not attempt an impossibility—the hydra-headed monster must have its day ; you will be too feeble, with any assistance you can command here, to oppose it. Give me, therefore, your honour,” extending his hand, “ you will in this case follow me immediately.”

The Comte’s eyes glistened with tears, as, after pressing his father’s hand, he returned back to the Castle.

The Marquis had continued with his colleagues to pay particular attention to the
H 2 family

family of Chevereux, now removed from the city to a magnificent hotel in the *Fauxburg St. Germain*s; and the Deputy, still a constant attendant in the private closet, though, as Madame C. said, while folks stood shilly shally, or, as her husband said, while there existed a doubt of the terms of his conversion, he was too wary to appear publicly at Court.

My poor half-distracted Charlotte and myself were still employed in unremitting attentions to Adelaide. It was winter, and a very rigorous season; but as exercise was strenuously recommended by the physicians, though Adelaide never seemed to be interested in the occurrences of the day, she was taken to walk round the delightful vicinity of the *chateau*, whenever the weather permitted.

My own constitution was grown extremely delicate. Charlotte's health was also very much impaired. We could not, therefore, both accompany her; nor indeed could I at all keep her pace in the
long

long walks she was in the habit of taking ; and as the cold grew more intense, I was obliged entirely to delegate Willis in my place.

Charlotte, who was beginning to be fond of drawing, had sketched a winter-piece which took in a part of the *chateau*, and a north view of the grounds. She had carried it out with her, and when on the spot from whence it was taken, naturally enough compared it with the site.

Adelaide was before ; but as she often walked on or lingered behind, and appeared disconcerted when she was observed, the two women who attended, Willis, and her own servant, caught with the accuracy of the drawing, begged to look at it, and with the usual wonderment of their sort, one pointed to those trees, the other to that temple, and so on, till Charlotte snatched it away, saying it was too cold to stand still. But where was Mademoiselle Adelaide ?

She was not in sight ! They were near the wood, to which there were several paths. Each took a different way ; but their consternation was unspeakable, when, after running backwards and forwards, shouting and calling, nothing was to be seen or heard of Adelaide !

“ I am born,” cried Charlotte, wringing her hands, “ to be the destruction of the being I best love on earth ! But for me this could not have happened !—you would not have neglected your duty, if I had not set the fatal precedent !”

The women were both in tears. Again and again they traversed the walks, and the woods reverberated with the name of “ Adelaide.” At last the wanderer was seen on the step of a Gothic temple, which, though quite embosomed in the woods, as the trees were stripped of their foliage, fright only could have overlooked.

Adelaide approached with unsteady step. Her cheek, on which the lilly had planted
a constant

a constant banner, now glowed with crimsoned animation ; her eyes, no longer dim and cast down, sparkled with intelligence ; and her heart beat so violently, as to shew its throbs through the muslin that covered her bosom.

“ Adelaide, my dearest Adelaide !” cried Charlotte, bursting into tears, and too much agitated to observe the alteration, which immediately struck the woman, “ Where have you been ? Why did you leave us ? You will kill your poor Charlotte !”

As these exclamations, the effusions of affectionate solicitude, had been before often addressed to the lovely insensible without the smallest effect, what was Charlotte’s amazement, her transport, when, after a moment’s hesitation, she heard the words “ I am sorry,” distinctly spoken by the loved lips which had so long been silent.

The shriek of my delighted girl produced a second proof of returning reason. Adelaide started and looked round with

visible terror. She made an effort to speak ; but failing in the attempt, drew back, and Charlotte entered the temple, more fearful to discover a vagrant wolf, than in expectation of a concealed lover ; but neither within nor near were to be found trace of man or beast, yet it was with great reluctance Adelaide suffered herself to be led from the spot, on which her eyes were turned as long as it was visible.

When I was informed of these circumstances, I had no doubt but there was a mystery attached to this temple, which, from the effect it certainly had on Adelaide, could only be traced to *one cause*, which it was proper immediately to develope.

She was the next day, with apparent carelessness, attended to the same spot ; Charlotte's drawing produced ; the women stopped. I had previously concealed myself in the temple, and waited the event.

Adelaide neither recollected the sketch nor any of the circumstances ; she had probably even forgot an occurrence of
more

more importance, till, having slowly advanced to a sight of the temple, she changed colour, started, and looked anxiously round.

I was strictly attending her motions. To my infinite delight I heard her begin to speak.

“ The quarter,” said she in a sort of whisper, “ is gone—it is near an hour past the time ; and yesterday, ah ! what a day was yesterday ! he does not appear. It struck five, and I told the minutes, and yet he is not come. I have seen him but once—and my papa looked so angry ; but if he came a thousand times nobody should hurt him. Madame Chevereux is certainly a very ugly woman, and her daughter is not pretty ; but, ah ! ”

A repressed shriek carried my attention to the opposite path, from whence, with slow and cautious steps, approached the Comte de Verencourt.

The mystery was now explained, and I resolved to witness an interview which I expected would be no less affecting than
 II 5 extraordinary ;

extraordinary; but the Comte was better informed than I imagined: after the event of the preceding day, he knew me too well to expect I should not be on the alert. He had seen me enter the temple, and, fearful of the effect any surprise might have on Adelaide, took a circuitous path to the opposite entrance, to apprise me that he was aware of my situation.

Adelaide's eyes followed him till he was no longer visible.

"What," said she, "this is his hour, and yet he is gone without speaking. Louis! Louis! won't you speak or look at your poor Adelaide?"

The Comte had by this time entered the temple on the other side; and though it was a detection for which I had no reason to blush, I certainly felt confused. I was going to say something in the shape of an apology, when he folded both my hands in his, and, pointing to Adelaide, burst into tears as he mournfully exclaimed—"Oh, look there!"

Far from being displeased at an incident of so much efficacy towards the restoration of one so dear, if my looks at all expressed my sentiments, he must have perceived how truly I sympathised in his misfortunes, and with what satisfaction I suffered his conduct now to influence mine. I, however, motioned to approach Adelaide, whose eyes were still directed to the avenue the Comte had quitted.

“ No,” said he in a low voice, “ I must do this my own way, else I have in vain crept about these woods till my stiffened limbs have refused their function ; yes, my tears have watered these plants ; I have laid on this cold marble till all within me died, save the love of that angel, which I will bear to my sepulchre !”

He then returned the way he entered, and presently appeared in the sight of Adelaide.

A melancholy smile dimpled round her pretty mouth.

“ Where have you been, Comte ?” said she. “ You are not used to make *me* wait. You was not here at twelve.”

“ I was, my Adelaide ; it was *me* that waited for *you*.—You did not keep your promise.”

“ Indeed ! that was very strange when I so longed to see you ; and I told the minutes till it was an hour past twelve, and then you know—— But you look pale ; you have remained in the cold temple ever since. Come, my friend, let me wrap my robe round you.—Oh come, let me hide you in my warm heart ; nobody will search for you there, for—for it is so desolate !”

“ Stop, Adelaide,” said the Comte as soon as his emotion would let him speak ; “ you will be cold yourself.”

She was actually unpinning her robe.

“ Ah Comte ! you have forgotten *me*—you know I am never cold—I am scorched up with something they have bound round, I think my head ; but sometimes I feel it
here,”

here," laying her hand on her bosom. "It is you, Comte, that forget every thing!—fie, fie! forget your friend! But let me see, let me look into your heart. Oh God protect me! it is not you, it is your brother, with tricks and contrivances!—Oh, do not touch me!"

I was surprised. I had lately often held detached conversations with Charlotte, when the Chevalier was the subject, and what she now said proved her less abstracted than she appeared. I saw the Comte looked indignant.

"Not touch you, my sweet Adelaide, must I not touch my own Adelaide? Am I hateful to you?"

"To me! the Comte de Verencourt, hateful to me!"

"And yet you speak daggers to him; you bid him not touch you."

"Did I, I am very sorry; you will be *angry*, and not come *again*, when I shall tell the minutes, and the quarters, and at last not see you; and then I shall leave all
the

the world to think only of you, and wish it was five o'clock and twelve o'clock from morning till night. But do not go, my friend, do not leave me, I am quite, quite alone. I have not seen a friend a long while—I never see them, and never speak; they are all changed, every thing is changed; but you, my friend, and me, we are the same; but even you shed tears, and you kneel—Oh rise, and swear you will not go!”

The Comte was in fact at her feet, his arms folded round her waist, and unable to speak.

“Hush!” cried Adelaide, putting her finger to her lip, and grasping the Comte.

I left the temple with precaution, and going round, entered the avenue fronting which she still stood. I accosted the Comte in my usual manner, was glad to see him, asked how long he had arrived, and why he continued in that cold temple. I then tenderly reproved Adelaide for fatiguing herself with so long a walk,
and

and invited them both to return to the *chateau*.

Charlotte, who on my signal joined us, offered her arm.

Adelaide stood irresolute; she looked wistfully on me, but did not relinquish her grasp of the Comte.

“ Take my arm too, my Adelaide,” said he, “ Won’t you ?”

She hesitated, pointing to the Comte’s other arm, I passed mine under it, and we returned to the *chatcau*. She seemed to examine us all by turns, sometimes with recollection, sometimes with suspicion.

We entered the saloon. She looked round: every object seemed to strike her as new. She folded both her hands over her eyes, and after a moment, started, rushed into my arms, and throwing her’s around my neck, burst into tears, exclaiming—“ Mamma, my dear mamma St. Herman ! is it you ?”

Our household physician was assisted by a person used to attend invalids in a
deranged

deranged state ; they were instantly called. I thought it right to hint that an interesting event had occurred. They answered, that though it was with great deference they could presume to differ from the opinion of the Paris physician, they had agreed that Mademoiselle was rather under the influence of a melancholy stupor than actual derangement ; and they were, what many wiser men are *not*—right.

I foresaw, however, that much as there was now to do, there might be also much hereafter to undo, and therefore only permitted the Comte to see Adelaide at the old stated hours of twelve one day, and five the next.

In the mean time I omitted nothing in my letters to Versailles that occurred, even to minute conversations, and as it was impossible for me to judge or advise in a case of such delicate importance, adduced my motives for every action, and requested particular instructions for my future conduct.

The

The Comte's motive for staying at the Castle after his father, and declining the company of the Chevalier, was now explained. He had not been told where Adelaide was; but, unobserved by the Duke, noted the date on the letter which had been shewn to him from the Duchess. As soon as he was at liberty, without acquainting even the Abbe with his intentions, further than leaving a line to prevent inquietude for his safety, which that upright man thought it his duty to send to the Duke, he set off for the *chateau*. My letter, therefore, occasioned no surprise but the joyful one of Adelaide's recovery, which was soon perfected; and the Duke commanded his son to join him in the capital, when his parole expired.

The unguarded information which Madame Chevereux's visit had so prematurely given, fixed on the mind of Adelaide an impression of the Comte, so different in all respects from that which love, friendship, and duty had combined to form, that no wonder

wonder a creature at once so young and passionately attached, should sink under a reverse so sudden and unexpected.

That the Comte had abandoned her whom he had always professed to adore ; that, dazzled by interest and immense riches, he had made her rival his free choice, was a cruelty as well as misfortune, which, inflicted by one so loved, subdued her mental as well as personal strength, and she had continued too indisposed, as well as abstracted, for the confessions Charlotte languished to make.

When restored to confidence in her lover, convinced he lived only for her, and that, however adverse their fate, he continued true to his vows, then it was she began to comprehend and deplore part of the motives, that forced both his parents and her's to a conduct, which she knew was as foreign from their judgement as inclinations, and to listen in terror to the details which every post brought from Versailles, of the actual subjugation of the royal family

family and their friends, to the ferocity of a multitude, inflamed by secret emissaries, and bribed by the arch enemy of the country, who, having given it under his own hand that he was in compact with a supernatural being, became the active agent of his infernal master; of the daily desertion of many whom gratitude should have bound to their sovereign, of the gloomy and fearful aspect of the once gay circle of the good King, whose throne, the throne of a long line of ancestors, trembled under him. The Queen, deserted by friends, insulted by enemies, and hanging in agony over her children, for whom we wept and prayed, to whose fate we felt, we *wished to feel*, our own united, and for whose comfort Adelaide voluntarily acknowledged her's was a poor sacrifice, a sacrifice indeed I began to apprehend of little avail.

When not engrossed by these dismal letters, I considered it a painful duty to dedicate, every moment we were together, to such conversations as would assist to
fortify

fortify the minds of my dear children, not only in the vicissitudes of life, but against that fiction of the heart—*first impressions*. The romance of real life supplied me with arguments and examples without number for the former purpose; and the history of the Duchess, which of course included that of the parents of Adelaide and my own, concealing only such enormities of St. Herman as did not immediately relate to me, brought the latter home to their hearts.

“ And is it possible,” cried Charlotte, throwing herself at my feet, “ that you have suffered so much from my father without hating his child, his faulty child ?”

“ And,” added Adelaide, “ has the Duchess been so ill treated by *my* father ? and is *his* daughter still dear to the heart his ingratitude so deeply wounded ? Ah ! and is she yet to be grieved by a De Courville ? Oh that in one moment the weak Adelaide could be an heroine !”

As

As the ardour of these sentiments might be improved by a relation of every circumstance to the advantage of the Comte, I then called on Charlotte for the confession her heart panted to make.

Adelaide saw she had been the innocent dupe of the Chevalier, and forgave her. Again she perused the letter from Versailles, and marked every passage which had at first escaped us, ending—" Oh that I could be an heroine !"

The Duchess, her spirits really affected by private sorrow as well as public disorder, wrote in a style of dejection very unusual to her ; and the Marquise, without appearing to intend it, never wanted new incidents relative to the distress of the Queen. The Dauphin was indisposed ; the health of her brother, the Emperor Joseph, rapidly declining ; the ladies, who had pretended the most zealous attachment, were among the first who deserted, not only her Court, but the country. The insolence of the rabble arrived at such a pitch

pitch of desperation that an army, in which the Duke de Verencourt declared he would be enrolled, was talked of to protect the King and his peaceable subjects, if any possible supplies could be raised for that purpose.

The mind of the King, wearied with the accumulating difficulties, indifferent to a minister, by whom he had been twice deceived, and unable to suggest any plan of relief to himself or his people, retired into the sanctuary of his own self acquittal, determined to meet and bear every calamity, except such as should render the spilling the blood of his deluded subjects necessary, which, even at the expence of his own, he resolved to avoid.

“ This then, Adelaide,” said the Comte, fixing his eyes tenderly upon her, “ is no longer the place for the eldest son of the Duke de Verencourt.”

“ Alas ! no,” she replied, and added—
“ Oh mamma ! the fiction of the heart is
then

then dissolved. The Comte asserts his own honour; he will next obey the impulse of duty."

"I swear to you, Adelaide, in the presence of God, of Madame St. Herman, of your Charlotte, of your adored self, never ——"

"Stop, stop, my dear Comte," said Adelaide; "we must part—you *must* leave your friend: you know not to what exigencies you will be reduced. If all depended on your own honour and courage, every vow would be more dear to my heart than ever; but if you can withstand the united command of the Duke and Duchess—if you can see my mother weep, and resist the arguments of my father—if you can witness the sorrows of our good King, and the anguish of the Queen, without exerting your utmost, however little it might avail, *I* have not so much fortitude. I love you, my dear Comte; and, since I dare avow it before Madame St. Herman, I know it is a virtue.

Alas !

Alas! has not my health, my peace, my reason proved how much I love you? But we will not *swear*, to persevere in any thing but duty and obedience."

"Adelaide," answered the Comte, rising in anger, "you will abandon me! I feel it at this moment! You cease to experience the delicious excess of a passion dearer to me than life: your heart resists its dictates; it receives the cold lessons of prudence from the judgement of one who does not feel. She reasons, she embraces, she weeps over you, she speaks, and you cannot withstand her arguments. Fatal to me are her exertions: you hear her, and you forget the bursting heart of your unhappy friend. You reject an oath meant to assure *you*, to bind *me* to *myself*; but an oath is needless. You are the sole spark in my vital existence, that will only cease to blaze, when I no longer breathe. Ah, my friend! this necessitude, so indispensable to sacrifice our hearts to the emergency of the times, *what is it?* Monsieur Chevereux
is

is silent; and his partizans do not act. What then? The Court is still in tumults, in dissention, and distress beyond Monsieur Chevereux's power of redress. Has his defection, if indeed it may be so called, dismayed a particle of the opposition?—has it conciliated the disaffected? or recalled one rebel to his duty? No, no, they talk as loud and as bold as when their rich leader vociferated fine spun nonsense in the Hall of Justice; and would they cease to do so if I had degraded my honour, my family, and my love, by espousing his daughter? Ah! no. The Minister may plead his word broken, his credit forfeited; he will demand the performance of my father's promise, he will exact the same from your's. The little people who emerge from obscurity into a thousand follies, will be outrageous at a disappointment of which, as one half of their own set will laugh, and the other despise, they will be ashamed to complain. All this I know, and I know too the consequence. But the

army is collecting. My father talks of bearing arms—my noble father! whose sacred life shall not be exposed either to domestic or foreign enemies while he has a son who can draw his sword. This then, and this only, is the motive which even love like mine cannot resist. I leave you, Adelaide; I go to Versailles, I lay my sword, my life, at the feet of my King. What more ought he to demand from one who, with the form, breathes also the spirit of a man of honour? But if *he* should forget the dignity and justice of *his* character, I will remember what is due to *mine*. The approbation even of my Prince is secondary to that of my own heart. You are mine, and I am your's, by all the righteous laws that bind man to man, and it is a right I never will forego; therefore, Adelaide, let not the cold-blooded arguments of Madame St. Herman——”

Adelaide had certainly, as the Comte said, been *advised*; she had been inspired with the courage to reject his oath by the
“ cold-

“ cold-blooded Madame St. Herman ;” but I was yet not *so cold-blooded* as to hear myself the object of his invective with indifference. I would have temporized, but he was too angry to permit me. He repeated—

“ Let not the cold-blooded arguments of Madame St. Herman, the politics of your natural parents, the gentle persuasions of your adopted mother, no, nor the loyal enthusiasm of my father, flatter you into an excuse for your breach of faith. Our vows have reached the King of Kings. *I* shall never change. When you hear I am no more, when the sword of honour or the stroke of anarchy have deprived me of life, when my mangled body shall become hideous, because it has ceased to be the temple of your dear perfections, then Adelaide will be no longer mine ; but till death has literally expelled your image from my heart, I will not forsake or relinquish you, never, never, dearest Adelaide.

Why, indeed, should I swear to a truth which God has already so often witnessed?"

Adelaide had spoken wisely, prudent, and just; but the Comte's reply penetrated her heart of hearts; and if the cold-blooded St. Herman did not wholly approve of all his effervescence, she at least respected that firm dignity of mind, which, whether as friend, relative, or lover, always distinguished the gallant Comte de V.

But if *I* had offended, my daughter became more endeared both to him and Adelaide by the warmth of her embrace, and by the tears she shed while passionately repeating—"My brother, my dearest noble brother!"

It was a painful and indeed difficult task to combat sentiments I approved, and to resist, or rather conceal, impressions made by arguments, which, so urged, was virtue; but if I adhered to duty, you will believe it was without the smallest pique to the Comte.

The

The parting of the lovers was a separation of congenial souls, anxious to ascertain that the secret book, which to open is misery, might contain many incidents to accelerate their reunion ; and struggling to resist that foreboding of misfortune which might fate this parting to be the last ; could then the look that admitted hope, or the embrace that might be final, be too often repeated ?

The Comte, reassured by feeling more than words, of the stability of Adelaide's attachment, entreated my pardon for his petulant reflections.

" You," said he, " have been the mother of my Adelaide's mind ; and you will not refuse your maternal blessing to him who must be her's, or nothing."

Charlotte, the affectionate Charlotte, who, since Adelaide's recovery and the renewed hope of seeing her happy, had fondly bid her own heart retire into its rest, returned the Comte's embraces with

repeated vows never to abandon his interest in the heart of her friend.

“ While I exist, my sister, my friend,” said the grateful Comte, not able to resist or conceal the streaming tears on his manly cheeks, “ you have a friend to *assist*, a brother to protect.”

It was now the beginning of February. The chaste snow-drop and sanguine crocus embroidered our walks; the sunbeams gilded the vine-clad hills at the extremity of our lake, and played on its transparent bosom. The almond blossom already displayed its gay livery; and the foliage of our beautiful woods were bursting from the pods. The feathered people, who served no King, feared no patriots, nor respected the richest heiress, were already in fine song.

Need I apprise you, Lady N. that the foregoing rhapsody is the language of Adelaide, you would only expect to understand from me in simple terms, that it was
a fine

a fine spring, more especially when I add that Adelaide's relapsing into profound melancholy left us too much out of spirits to hail the present genial season as we had done the past.

May you and your's enjoy many such, free from the anxiety which then oppressed the heart of

H. ST. HERMAN.

PACKET VII.

THE reception of the Comte at his father's and at Court, was kind and flattering; but the subject so inimical to his happiness was renewed with increased zeal. It was now too supported by the Duchess, whose energy was the more worthy of admiration, as it was against her own secret judgement; but neither the persuasions of his respected mother-in-law, nor the command of his more respected father, availed; the Comte varied no *iota* from his text, the first interview ended in being forbidden to enter the Duke's presence; and
the

the result was immediately communicated to the Marquis de Courville.

As the conferences on difficult points of a private nature were generally held at the suppers of the Duchess of P. all the parties interested in this business, except the obstinate Comte, were invited to meet there.

The Duchess P. who had lately given her beautiful daughter to a husband selected by herself, saw no difficulty in so common an arrangement, as obliging a son or daughter to marry as the parents commanded.

“And,” added the politic Diana, “if the Duke de V. has not authority to influence his son, though really what most seems wanting is energy——”

“It required,” the Duchess de V. said, “more than energy to force a person of the Count de V.’s rank and sentiments to resign a woman on whom he doated, in favour of another whom he disliked, and with whose mind, manners, or connexions,

it was not probable he would ever assimilate."

"No doubt," replied the female politician, whose meddling brain had so long annoyed the Court; "but as it is not so difficult to manage with a daughter, who possibly has no such pretensions, if Mademoiselle de Courville were married, the Comte would of course become more reasonable."

All eyes were now turned on the De Courvilles.

"You are not aware," said the Marquise in a low faltering voice, "the poor child has actually been deranged."

"Are we not all so at a certain age?" demanded the Duchess de P. laughing.

The Minister, who had contracted that insensibility of heart, which, according to Voltaire, "arises from a long administration," gravely observed, that it was a distressing business, and could not be more painfully embarrassing to any of the parties concerned, than it really was to himself.

himself. The misfortune was, he said, that a private loan had been filled by the credit of M. Chevereux, which had enabled him to pay the troops now advancing to Paris; that a second was in agitation from the same quarter; and that if M. Chevereux, who had already stood the ridicule of some, and the insult of others, on his suspected apostacy, were disappointed by the breach of a contract on the part of Ministry, which he, on his part, had performed to an *iota*, there was an end to all private intercourse with the monied men; and to this cause, trifling as it appeared, the state might owe its ruin.

There were few loans of any kind in which Diana P. was not deeply interested: her subtle and contriving genius was now at work. She proposed to the Marquis the taking his daughter under his own protection.

The condition of Madame de Verencourt's legacy rendered that impossible.

“ Send her then to St. Cyr, or to the Convent where she has already boarded ; but in either case prevent the Comte from seeing her. He may be prevailed upon to visit Mademoiselle Chevereux merely to oblige his father. He may go to their new hotel ; it is a curiosity.”

“ Let us all go,” joined Madame P. “ The Comte may then be sent off in haste to the army ; they will expect his return. But in the mean while the Chevalier is on good terms there. He is handsome, well made, and not in love with the divine daughter of our friend the Marquis. They make Peers in England with the same facility we do Knights of the Order of St. Louis here ; and why may not we create a Duke ?”

Diana P.’s wit was applauded ; but as she was in the habits of being as much deified in certain places as execrated in others, she was neither elated by the former nor depressed by the latter.

But

But no wit could reconcile the Duke to her disposal of his sons. The Marquis had no such delicate scruples about his daughter, whose marriage, it was now plain, would forward no views of his own.

No body, however, offered a syllable in opposition to Madame P.'s wit; and as the party happened to be in good spirits, and part at least of the company disposed to entertain each other, the supper passed gaily. The Duke and Duchess returned home, half an hour before the sun rose, with aching heads and heavy hearts. If the Duke was hurt at the disposal of his sons, the Duchess was no less so at the interference with Adelaide; and neither had any great *goût* to the shrine of folly in M. Chevereux's new hotel.

The Marquise called, in precisely the same humour, though as the Marquis, insisted on adhering to the very letter of Madame P.'s arrangement, and enforced his commands with *spirit*, she had not dared to avow her sentiments.

“ What

“What a consolation, Marquise, do we derive from St. Herman and her daughter,” said the Duchess, “at this afflicting crisis; they will accompany our dear Adelaide wherever destiny forces her. She had before written to apprise me we were expected to leave the *chateau*.”—And the visit being now settled to the hotel Chevereux the Duchess asked the Comte to escort her.

“I will do any thing my charming mother bids me,” answered the Comte, “respecting these little people, except marrying their daughter.”

“It is not, however, absolutely necessary,” replied the Duchess, “your sentiments should be seen in your manner; be at least civil, and we shall see what time may do.”

Plunged, as the Comte was, in the deepest despair; under the displeasure of his father; ignorant of the fate designed for Adelaide; too jealous of the Chevalier’s duplicity to be on terms with him; the Abbe Riccobini still in Languedoc—it is
difficult

difficult to conceive the effect the answer of the Duchess produced on him.

He heard of the meeting at Madame P.'s, and, suspecting the subject of deliberation, was filled with apprehensions of the consequence; but this "Let us see what time will do," of the Duchess, was the eloquence of an angel: nothing then was determined since the end admitted of doubt.

He repaired to his toilette. His dress always elegant, was now peculiarly appropriate to the visit; hope danced in his eyes, and Adelaide reigned in his heart. He handed the Duchess to her *berline* and followed in his own.

Nothing in the world was ever so fine as the hotel Chevereux. Notwithstanding the well-known ostensibility of her purse, Madame C. actually wearied the upholsterers with the expensive conceits which rapidly succeeded each other. Where a woman of rank and taste would have placed one grand mirror, Madame C. insisted

insisted on three. The furniture was beflounced, befringed, and belaced, like her own peticoat, row above row, in gold, silver, and silk, every ornament trebly ornamented; the sideboards groaned under massy plate; and the laced laquais confused each other by their uselessness and number.

Monsieur Chevereux affected a plainness of dress: he was black from the counsellors wig to the false-calved stockings, that gave a something like nature to the shape of his legs; but Madame and Mademoiselle made full amends.

The toilette of these ladies was under the sole and complete direction of Mademoiselle Couthon: there was an ingenuity in this lady's calculation that distanced M. Chevereux himself, although it simply consisted in the maxim of—"the more finery the ladies wore, the greater would be her perquisites;" for she had condescended to sink the governess, and accept of the *dame de place* at the hotel Chevereux.

Madame

Madame C. was of the tallest description of tall women: her face, which needed not rouge, was tolerably broad as well as long—two little grey eyes peeped out from under an ample forehead—her turn-up nose was contrasted by a great length of chin—and her mouth, being always open, would have been shocking, had it not been furnished with large strong teeth. Imagine this face, and add to it an enormous *tête* crowded with diamonds of all shapes and dimensions, interspersed with roses, green leaves, fine lace, plumes of different coloured feathers, and the ringlets, which hung to her waste, tied with coloured ribbons. She wore a dress of rose-coloured satin covered with a gold net, every where fastened with diamonds, where a diamond could be crammed in.

Mademoiselle was the counterpart of her mamma in dress, though her ingenuous countenance seemed blushing for both, except that her ornaments were silver and pearls.

A misfortune, common to little traders,
who

who, by some unfortunate chance, attain power to render themselves ridiculous, by mixing with people; of whose manners, pursuits, and customs, they are the awkward imitators, is the passion of exhibiting the the new-acquired consequence to the wondering companions of their old, and more suitable habits; and, if a few titled people, tempted by interest or caprice, do alight from their stilts to feed the pride of such upstarts, they are sure to have their delicate nerves shocked by the heterogenous mixture.

If Madame Chevereux could not astonish Madame Demoullin, the corn-contractor's wife, Madame Dimanche, the notaries wife, and Madame Lesartres, sausage-maker to the Royal Family, with their respective sons, who were *petit maîtres*, and daughters who were as nervous, as whimsical, and as indolent as the best Duchess in France: if she could not fill them with admiration of her grandeur, and envy of her company; if, after the many weary days and sleepless nights, that preceded her grand gala, it was not

to be wondered at, and talked of, by those who had presumed to rank with her, though not half so rich ; if Lords and Ladies were only to be seen by each other, what did Madame Chevereux gain by that ? Her particular friends were, therefore, invited to stare and be stared at—

“ And with loud laugh through all the changes rung
To applaud the abortive sallies of her tongue.”

The Marquis and Marquise de Courville, the Marquis B., Monsieur N., the Duke de Verencourt, the P.'s, the L.'s, were among many more, who, some for interest, others for amusement, were all assembled at the hotel Chevereux before the *valet de place* announced the Duchess and Comte de Verencourt ; then it was that Monsieur C. pulled the plain cambric frill of his shirt forward—that Madame's tall round figure seemed to grow more tall and more round—and that Mademoiselle appeared, as she really was, covered with confusion.

The charming Duchess, who carried to
the

the age of forty both the grace of person and sensibility of countenance, which were pre-eminent in the world of beauty, was the plainest dressed woman there ; but her natural dignity needed not ornaments, and the present visit did not stimulate the pride of the family.

The Duke and Chevalier were already seated. The latter, an immense favourite with the Chevereux, often dined *en famille* at their table, and heard rehearsals of several fine speeches intended to have been delivered by M. Chevereux, had not the expected noble alliance stopped the current of his eloquence ; and he had also been initiated by Madame C. into a history of all the fine things her new house displayed.

He was informed that she had carefully attended the sales of all the great people ; for, as M. Chevereux said in one of his speeches in the hall of justice—" The wise man stores what the fool throws away," and by that means she had procured an assemblage of elegance at half price.

Ninon

Ninon, who he ever addressed as his charming sister, with whose grace and beauty he was perfectly ravished, was sure to find him at her elbow, where, indeed, he was snugly seated, at the moment every eye was turned on his brother.

The Duchess presented the Comte to Monsieur, Madame and Mademoiselle Chevereux, and to their friends, the corn-contractor, the notary, and sausage maker.

The Comte, his spirits raised from the deepest dejection by the—"Let us see what time may do," recollected the hint respecting the concealment of his sentiments, and nothing could be more obliging than his attention to every being to whom he was presented, nor any thing more charmed than the Chevereux and their city friends.

With the rest of the company he was on the usual familiar terms of polite acquaintance; and Madame P., who had not before seen him, confessed to the Duke that *his*

son

son and M. Chevereux's daughter were every way a very ill suited pair.

The Chevalier officiously resigned his seat next Ninon to his brother, in a way that would have rendered the declining it ungracious and disobliging: he therefore accepted it with the intention of entertaining her with common place compliments; but she gave him a better subject—she spoke of Adelaide de Courville, and Charlotte St. Herman, dwelling with unfeigned delight on the praises of the latter, and anxiously solicitous about the health of the former, who, she said, always prepared her mind for her confessor, her looks were so angelic.

Did the Comte de Verencourt ever believe he could be charmed with the conversation of Ninon Chevereux, yet he now felt more delight in it than had entered his heart, from the time he left the *chateau*. An hundred little anecdotes of Charlotte's humour and vivacity, in which the name, sentiments, and manner, of Adelaide were insensibly

insensibly blended, fixed the attentive eye of the Comte on the face of Mademoiselle C., and, as the company were making their tables, the sofa, on which they were seated, became gradually deserted by the rest of the company.

Madame P. whispered Monsieur N. "they were right," and took an opportunity to congratulate the Duke on *appearances*.

So pleased was the Comte with his companion, that he never thought of offering to return the seat to the Chevalier, who did not lose the occasion of remarking to the Duchess, the evident satisfaction of his countenance.

The Duchess, and her friend the Marquise, were not deficient in their remarks; but these were attended with a sort of contradictory sensation.

If the Comte married Mademoiselle Chevereux, the minister would not only be satisfied, but served, and that, at his great need, the Duke's pledged word was
not

not forfeited, and the Marquis's command obeyed.

“ But then, Adelaide ——.”

“ Well,” said the Duchess, “ we will not talk of these things; they are very poor who have not patience. Time, as the English poet says—‘ Time is the breeder of all things,’ and *we shall see*. ”

Madame Chevereux who, added to Couthon's advice and instructions, having treasured in her memory all the decorations of the Palais de Verencourt, and fixed one real care on her mind, from that period to the present, which was to out-show and out-entertain the Duchess, so far succeeded as to merit her own secret approbation, when her little grey eyes were thrown round in extacy, to observe on the envy and admiration of her old friends.

On the part of the Nobility, as soon as their opinions were settled on the point in view, they made up their minds to the game they were playing Too much used to insignificance to be diverted by it, except

a lady's eye glancing from the hostess, or her fair daughter, to her own party, fraught with an expression of drollery; or except the Marquis de Courville, whose visible one eye was of exquisite use in satirical meaning, should dart it at any of the Nobles in the secret, on seeing M. Chevereux holding the Minister by the button, while he repeated, with a grin of delight, what he had before reiteratedly explained, respecting the number and description of his friends, the amount of his riches, and the brilliancy of his talents.

But it was not thus with the citizens: the corn-contractor's lady whose two daughters were very pretty, though, unfortunately, no body at Madame Chevereux's new hotel had leisure to observe it, except the Marquis de Courville; he, indeed, made it a rule to select the prettiest and most neglected woman in company, to whom his civil things were, on the latter account, the more acceptable.

Madame Desmoullin, however, whose husband was also rich, could not comprehend what could possibly attach the Comte de Verencourt to such a dowdy.

“ You see, Sir,” said she, addressing the Marquis, who was in the act of dying for her daughter, “ you see the poor thing is far from being handsome or attractive; she extremely resembles her father, who has but one tolerable eye, the other is absolutely shocking.

Madame Desmoullin could not have made a more *mal-a-propos* remark, nor have chosen a more unsuitable confidant. The Marquis’s one eye darted indignation; he repented his attention to her daughter, and, haughtily turning on his heel, discovered, to the mortified Madame Desmoullin, the error she had unwittingly committed.

Exceedingly chagrined at having affronted a Marquis, and her daughter as equally so at having lost the attention of the only man out of their own circle, who seem disposed
to

to pay her any, they continued out of spirits and out of humour, abusing every body and every thing, till, all the Nobility being gone, they departed, leaving Madame Chevereux astonished at their want of civility, and ransacking her brains for the cause which at last, not being able to divine any other, she set down for envy, with which, she said, the girls, who, though frights, thought themselves pretty, had been bursting from the moment the Comte made love to Ninon.

Madame Dimanche, the notary's lady, whose husband was present, and who also made speeches in his turn, had, from the similiarity of sentiments that appeared to exist between the two patriots, flattered herself that her son, a tall overgrown boy of eighteen, was a proper husband for Mademoiselle Chevereux, and an eligible heir to her father's fortune ; it was, therefore, with the indignation of true patriotism she observed, on the intimacy of M. Chevereux and the Minister, and, with the

utmost difficulty, repressed her abhorrent sentiments of a man who forsook the cause of the people to aggrandise his daughter, till she, her husband, and tall son, had reached their own home in the Fauxburgh St. Antoine.

Madame Lesartres was not accompanied by *her* husband, that person's modesty prevented his showing a very fine suit of silk clothes, point ruffles, and elegant sword, in the presence of people whose approbation of his sausages had so filled his coffers, that, had he not been blessed with fourteen children to M. Chevereux's one, *he* too might have bargained to be father-in-law to a Comte.

His spouse, however, lost no consequence by his absence: she was as high-dressed and as high-perfumed as any lady present; not the late Duchess de Verencourt herself, with all the Bourbon pride, and all her own caprice, could boast more exquisite otto of roses, nor pay a higher price for what was genuine. This lady was also un-
attended

attended by her children: they were too *young to bring out*, though two of her sons had done her the honour to make her a grandmother, and although the youngest of seven daughters, all boarded in a convent for education, was in her twentieth year. But Madame Lesartres chose to be young, and, as she was very rich and gave good suppers, all the men in her circle chose to swear she was so; she had, therefore, great cause of disgust, after having been six hours at her toilette, not to meet, at the hotel Chevereux, one man willing to confirm so established a point.

M. Lesartres, though he had quietly picked up a few millions of livres by his manufactory of sausages, was of opinion, that Nobles were a race of useless beings, who engrossed certain little conveniences, to which him and his sort, considering all mankind as the descendants of Father Adam and Mother Eve, had an equal claim, and, therefore, the said Nobles were

K 3

usurpers,

usurpers, and ought not to be tolerated in a Christian country.

Madame Lesartres had often heard her husband sport these profound tenets, under the greasy cap that covered his scanty grey hairs, when he inspected his manufactory ; but, as Monsieur L. was a gentleman for whose opinion Madame L. had less respect than for that of any other gentleman of her acquaintance, she had not given it the sanction of her approbation, or the odium of her dislike. In a word, the politics of Madame Lesartres were not yet fixed, that great achievement to the popular cause was reserved for the gala of the hotel Chevereux—there it was, that Madame L. was convinced the Nobles of France were a set of rude, insensible fellows, not worthy to live, nor fit to die—that the women were worse than the men—and that it was extremely impertinent in Madame Chevereux to keep such company.

When

When the folding-doors were thrown open and displayed the supper tables, the second triumph of our hostess began and ended; for, in her zeal to show respect to her Noble guests, she overwhelmed them with ceremony, which tired and disgusted—neglecting the citizens, who could not dispense with a single *iota* of what they invariably expected.

The delicacies, however, on table, which were of the most rare and expensive sort, reconciled the jarring interests, while they were on table; but with the desert the superior set, if I may venture so to describe people who were only Nobles, whereas the rest were contractors, notaries, sausage-makers, and citizens.

The superior set dropped off, too weary to laugh any longer at the fever into which Madame Chevereux was thrown by her violent exercise at the head of her table—the citizens followed, dissatisfied with her—the company—and themselves; and

K 4

thus

thus our poor hostess, whose great mind and body had actually suffered a martyrdom, to render her house, her entertainment, herself, and daughter, the subject of universal admiration, retired to her chamber exhausted and fatigued, the jest of one part of her company, the envy of the other, and dislike of all.

She, however, slept well, and dreamed over the triumph of the night, but not before Couthon had been astonished how, in such delicate new-furnished apartments, it was possible the gold and silver gauze, the rose-coloured and Du Barry satin, with the net trimming, could get so much dust, from which, she demonstrated, they were so much injured, it was not possible for such ladies as Madame and Mademoiselle Chevereux to wear a second time, which Madame C. being too sleepy to disprove, she bundled them into her own room, and, after displaying them to Monsieur Fontuil, the *valet de place*, with whom she was
on

on very friendly terms, slept well; also dreaming of new galas, new dresses, and dusty rooms.

Mademoiselle Chevereux, the barometer, of whose affection had risen with extreme velocity, did not so soon yield her bright eyes to the soporific wand of the leaden God. She endeavoured to recollect all the tender things the Comte said to her in the course of the evening, but, though that was not possible, no blame could be laid to her memory, because, in fact, nothing of the kind had passed; his looks then—those, indeed, must rest not only with the lady's memory, but her imagination, to which she was in no small degree indebted for that sweet delirium, which dresses fancy in the airy garment of hope, and steeps the sense in a sweet oblivion of doubt, fear, and uncertainty.

Mademoiselle C. at length composed herself to sleep, quite sure that the Comte

was the most charming of men, and a very short time would complete her happiness.

As I profess some kindness for this little body, and, as lady N. will not expect we shall indulge her in many such pleasing reveries, I shall here close this packet.

H. ST. HERMAN.

PACKET

PACKET VIII.

TO LADY N——.

THE Duchess and her Cicesbéo returned in the order they went, and, although the latter could not presume to enter his father's presence, he repeated to himself the "Let us see what time will do," and went to his chamber to dream of Adelaide.

The Duke arrived within a few minutes, disgusted at the evening's entertainments, but highly satisfied with his son.

“ I think,” said he, “ there is intelligence in the girl’s countenance ; but for the Counsellor !”

“ To say nothing of the wife,” joined the Duchess.

“ I also think,” resumed the Duke, “ the Comte may breakfast with us to-morrow.”

The Duchess was pleased ; but, as they retired to rest without leaving orders, instead of the Comte they found a billet on the breakfast-table, informing the Duchess that an order from the King had obliged him to set out on the moment to the army.

The domestic harmony, which had been the delight of the Duke and the admiration of his friends, no longer existed. The heir of the family was exiled from the tenderness of the best of father’s ; all hope of happiness wrested from the object next himself, most dear to his Duchess ; the Chevalier too left the capital the next ; the Duke was indisposed ; the Duchess quite *ennuied*. They proposed an excursion

to

to the *chateau* ; but, to their extreme vexation, understood that such a step at present would be very painful to their Majesties.

The Duchess could not disguise her chagrin : she would have left Versailles and remained in Paris, however prejudicial to her own health and repose, had not the desperation of the times induced the King to convene the States, and, though dissuaded by his Ministers, directed them to meet at Versailles, where it would then be incumbent on the Duke to remain ; but previous to the meeting, he again mentioned the Duchess's wish, and, however mortifying to their high spirit, it could not be concealed that the humouring the Counsellor was of more consequence than the convenience or even health of the friends of the King.

Many circumstances indeed concurred to ruffle the temper of the orator, among the least of which we are to reckon on the glory he had already lost, and that he might still lose by simply holding his tongue. His neighbour and rival, the
notary,

notary, had already commented on a supper where the favourites of the Court and two Ministers were entertained ; although the little counsellor had persevered in a distant coldness through the whole evening, and although he had in half sentences said that it was the solicitations of the De Verencourt family, on account of a mutual passion of their son and his daughter, to which after all he doubted whether he would consent, that induced Madame C. to change her hotel ; but however successful in imposing on others, he could not deceive himself.

In fact the Comte did not, in M. Chevereux's opinion, conduct himself like a man desperately in love, or sensible of the obligation the counsellor knew he had conferred somewhere. He was not a man to be trifled with in money concerns, or to be cajoled out of his popularity ; and this he roundly told the Minister.

The Duchess was out of patience ; but the Duke, willing to reconcile what was fast growing into opposite duties, attendance
on

on the King and indulgence of his Duchess, proposed a medium, to which she consented, which was to invite Mademoiselle Chevereux to accompany her to the *chateau*.

“ I have no dislike to the little body,” replied the Duchess. “ She is distractedly fond of Charlotte ; and Adelaide is too secure of the Comte to be uneasy.”—She accordingly drove to the hotel Chevereux.

The family were at that moment conversing on the subject of Ninon’s establishment, Madame C. declaring in the strongest language a lady of the order of the *tier état* could declare any thing, her anger against the Comte de V. for having left Paris without paying his devoirs to her, taking leave of her husband, or naming the day of his marriage to her rich heiress.

A tear that found a reluctant way to the burning cheek of his daughter, fired the combustibles of the orator’s constitution.

“ What !” exclaimed he, “ have I remained silent in Parliament, and heard the shouts of applause, that should have been mine,

mine, pass me? Have I deprived myself of hearing the speech of Monsieur *l'Avocat* Chevereux cried through the streets, and seeing them eagerly bought by all the ladies of the *tier etat*, who could read, to see my darling child——”

“ The heiress of Monsieur *l'Avocat*,” joined Madame C.

“ Oh,” continued M. Chevereux, “ if they dare deceive me, this King who has no longer any power, this Queen whom we hate, these Nobles whom we despise——”

The Duchess de Verencourt was announced, and entered just in time to prove that an orator, whose speeches were bought by the ladies of the *tier etat*, in the hall of justice, and in the presence of a person of real rank, though a despised Noble, were very different beings.

The family were instantly on their legs, and Monsieur C.'s little blue nose touched his slipper; not that Madame Chevereux wanted power or inclination to insult the best Duchess in France, had not the looks both of Ninon and her father been a restraint.

restraint. The truth is, the counsellor did possess a little, and Ninon a good deal of that understanding of which Madame C. was totally deficient.

Real good breeding is of that conciliating nature that ceremony expires before it. The family were reseated, and the Duchess took a cup of their chocolate before she mentioned the purport of her visit.

Madame C. took in all the credit of the excursion among her city friends in a moment. She proudly pictured her Ninon sitting by the side of the Duchess in her *berline*; and the Comte's neglect was no more remembered.

Ninon's imagination immediately fixed on the one thing desirable to her, as the Comte was gone a direct contrary way, which was a meeting with Charlotte.

M. Chevereux, who left every thing to his wife but his speeches, his daughter, and his money, saw Ninon was happy, and that made him so: he bowed and bowed. Madame curtsied and curtsied till Ninon, a
thing

thing that two years before would have been incredible, was actually seated by the Duchess de Verencourt in her *berline*.

Lady N. will not doubt that a meeting with the Duchess in our present situation was equal happiness to both her and me; but a secret mission from the General, under whom the Chevalier served, gave that young officer an opportunity of paying his duty to his father at the *chateau*, which he had every reason to expect would be his own; and as the Duke, really indisposed, travelled slow, he arrived two hours before the family suite.

Adelaide had recovered, she had even improved in beauty; but a melancholy, not indeed so alarming as we had seen it, though infinitely affecting, pervaded her system. She was flying to the Duchess, but at sight of Ninon stopped, turned pale, and could only sigh—"Oh, my mamma!"

The Duchess pressed her to her heart. Still her glance was directed to Ninon; and she stood before her friends divested of
that

that natural glow of affectionate pleasure that hitherto so much endeared their meeting.

No caresses of the Duke and Duchess could chase a sort of sad and new reserve : she received, but did not return the embraces of her adopted mother, who, she believed, had brought to the *chateau* the future bride of her son ; and though the resigning him to his parents and his duty was a virtue she possessed in fancy, yet sure she might have been spared a humiliation like this !

Since the Comte's departure, Adelaide had ceased to smile ; but the world was not that frightful desert, the aching void was not so painful as it had been ; no, for her lover was yet faithful, his truth inviolate, and his heart, his undeviating heart all her own. Should she then desert herself ? Should the rich Ninon triumph ? Was she brought to the *chateau* for that purpose ? No, pride more efficacious than medicine, enabled her to assume a sufficient cheerfulness.

ness. She retired to her toilette, and left the Duchess and myself to the mutual endearment of long and unreserved friendship.

Charlotte's temper was sanguine: she little relished the visit of the Chevalier, and indeed, remembering the deceit he had put her on practising, he was not the most welcome guest to me that could have preceded my friends at their *chateau*.

I had no reserve with the Duchess, and she had too much sincere love for the mother to remain inexorable to the penitence of her daughter. But though we looked over all the letters Charlotte had received from the Chevalier, the Duchess was not willing to believe, notwithstanding the mischievous turn of which so irrefragable a proof was in her hand, that a youth, for whom she had always designed so much, was not to be advised, and, in some degree, governed.

She persuaded herself that the Chevalier still would prefer the lively, giddy, Charlotte

lotte to the sober sentimental Adelaide, as well in respect to the wish of his friends as because her disposition was apparently similar to his own.

I had too often combated these ideas without effect, to hope I should succeed better now, so leaving the Chevalier and his concerns, I could not help expressing my surprise at the companion she had selected for her visit to the *chateau*.

“It was,” she replied, “an act of necessity, not choice.”

“It is an act, however,” I answered, “that has plunged a dagger into the heart of Adelaide !”

“What is it you say, St. Herman ?” replied the Duchess with emotion, “Is it me, to whom not even yourself are more dear—me, to whom her happiness is of equal import with my own—is it me, who am accused of plunging the dagger into a bosom already pierced with sorrow ? I cannot comprehend this ; but after a moment’s recollection of the altered manner
of

of Adelaide, and reference to the peculiar circumstance under which she was still suffering, the Duchess felt the pain she unintentionally inflicted on the feeling of the being she tenderly loved so acutely, that I was obliged to turn accusation to comfort.

I had also to apprehend another unpleasant consequence of the visit of Ninon. I found my instructions to my daughter, to treat the unconscious intruder with particular respect, so ill received, that I began to anticipate mortification to one who certainly was the least disposed to merit it; but I was afterwards surprised to see Charlotte devote herself so entirely to her, and even often to dispense with sincerity in the court she paid her, that I really concluded the heart of my own child was precisely the one I was the least acquainted with.

You will perceive, Lady N. that I do not pretend to draw perfect characters; Charlotte's was far from it: her disposition
had

had in it extremes, very inimical to her own happiness; and though the most steady in attachment, her humour varied with the hours, which indeed were the primary cause of the misfortunes in which the family, to whom we owed so much, were involved.—“Do not,” said I, “Charlotte, do evil that good may come of it; ’tis a sacred lesson, and no circumstance can occur in human life to impeach its infallibility.”

But Charlotte was at this period meditating on causes and effects, and frequent secret discussions on what really *was* and *was not* evil. After turning up her saucy nose at the Chevalier—“I shall impose silence on myself,” said she, “during the term of this bad man’s visit.”—But the sight of Ninon, alighting from the carriage with the Duchess, changed the system of silence into loquacity, and though yet smarting under the consequent correction of one plot, another suggested itself, which being all her own, if she could but reconcile

cile her mother's precept to her own practice, must set all the wrong to right.

Few young ladies commence arguments with themselves, without having predecided on the question; to "do evil that good might come of it" was wrong; but can it be evil to act with a good intention?—She hoped not, and so the discussion ended, as most young ladies discussions ever have and will end, on the side of inclination. But as her abilities for carrying on the plots of another had been so fatally proved, she resolved to begin anew on her own credit.

If Ninon, who she never suspected of sentiment, had such power over her father in favour of one lover, if rank, and all the fascinating *et ceteras* were the object, why was not the Chevalier as eligible as his brother to gratify the vanity of the Chevereuxs?

The Chevalier, who was already a great favourite, who never addressed Ninon but as his charming sister, whose flatteries were

continually poured into her ready ear, and who, in case of obtaining the suffrage of orator Chevereux, might, as Madame P. hinted, be made any thing ; it was, however, a trial of such importance to her dear brother, and to her dearer sister, to the Duke, the Duchess, to us all, that surely the most fastidious would not call that evil, which was meant for general good.

It was, therefore, in consequence of a settled plan, that I was both surprised and hurt by observations on her conduct, and that Adelaide, jealous of the Duchess's affection, and perhaps fearful of its influence, as well as piqued at the almost total neglect of Charlotte, shut herself up from us all, except at the supper hour (which Lady N. need not be told is in France the principal social meal) when she seldom spoke but to answer, and that generally in monosyllables.

Charlotte in the mean time, wholly taken up with the brilliancy of her secret arrangement, devoted herself to the delighted

Ninon; amused her with the unbounded pleasantries, she very well knew how to accommodate to the medium of her understanding; with flattery which she took uncommon pains to disguise; and by every indication of excessive regard, except actual profession; so that her influence over the mind of the admiring and affectionate Ninon, not a little no doubt increased by recollection that it was she who first discovered the passion of the Comte, was complete.

There seemed indeed a sort of rivalry between the Chevalier and Charlotte, in inflating the vanity of the little citizen, of course there was no stirring without the Chevalier.

A total revolution at once took place in the sentiments of Charlotte, which however she wanted experience to render uniform. She affected the most profound admiration of the Chevalier's person and wit; his lips could not open without the marks of her ready approbation; but while she

she professed the most friendly attachment in the presence of Ninon, she lost no opportunity of expressing her contempt of his art, and indignation at having been his dupe, when they happened to meet alone.

The Chevalier, who added to infinitely more *finesse* than, thank Heaven, was possessed by my daughter, a generalship of observation, in which she was a mere novice, could not but suspect a meaning in all this inimical to his interest; and as he also suspected the family, the ladies of it at least, would be very luke-warm in his favour, he resolved to oppose prejudices with art, and he was not long in making himself complete master of the shallow politics of poor Charlotte, who very soon so far succeeded in her plan as to leave Ninon in no doubt, however decided her preference, that both the sons of the Duke were her passionate admirers; and she took every opportunity of adducing circumstances to prove the attachment of the

Chevalier, out of all comparison, the *most* passionate ; which, indeed, the marked difference between the coldness of the one and the devotion of the other, would have sufficiently demonstrated. But the Comte had a friend in Court.

When the Chevalier alluded to the good fortune of his happy brother in the prospect of possessing so amiable a creature, Charlotte was sure to perceive a lurking jealousy, very ill concealed under affected friendship. If he presumed to hint at that neglect, of which Charlotte herself often reminded her, nothing could be more evident than that it proceeded from envy, the most excusable feature indeed of that detestable vice, since it was the natural result of his own secret attachment. If, in his usual way, he addressed her as “ charming,” “ lovely,” “ adorable,” she remarked a repressed emotion. Then, he was a model of beauty ; not so tall indeed as his brother, but his complexion—was ever any thing so animated, or so charming ? His eyes—what eyes !

eyes!—how tender! how expressive! and when he smiled, who ever beheld such a mouth and teeth? Besides this, was he not amiable, sensible, well-bred, and the finest dancer in the world?

Ninon denied none of those excellencies, and Charlotte secretly exulted.

The Chevalier continued the profound respect and attention he had accustomed himself to pay the little citizen, which indeed it was out of the list of his manœuvres to slacken; and still Charlotte exulted.

So apparently zealous, and yet so totally unmeaning were the compliments of Frenchmen to fine women at that period, that it was extremely easy to attach sentiments to them as far from truth as probability. The insincerity, therefore, of common phrases, afforded her sufficient proofs of what did not exist, to impose on the credulous little citizen.

But Ninon had been talked into a passion no casuistry could talk her out of. Although impressed by that genuine trait of true

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affection,

affection, "diffidence," she had not courage to avow it.

When the super-excellence of the Chevalier, with the hourly repeated register of all his charms and perfections, obliged the voluble Charlotte to pause, the heart of Ninon would have enumerated the superior accomplishments and graces of his elder brother, whose name, of which she longed to hear and to speak, was never mentioned by her perverse friend without a shrug of disapprobation.

Confiding in the judgement of Charlotte, which had hitherto been so propitious to her first wish, why should she doubt it to be less infallible with respect to the Chevalier? But whatever *his* sentiments, *her's* could not alter: her heart steadfastly and silently adhered to its first impression; and she anxiously watched for that opportunity, when, not discouraged by her friend, she might vent some of the overflowings of her fond affection in opposing the innumerable perfections of the Chevalier,
with

with a few simple words in favour of his brother ; but this was an opportunity which never occurred.

Short, however, was the plotting triumph of my poor Charlotte. The Chevalier was not to learn the light in which she held him ; but the contempt which her having been so completely his dupe inspired, did not put him off his guard. He suspected nothing so little as that Ninon could feel a real attachment, unconnected with vanity and ambition. Her natural simplicity, vulgar connections, and low blood, placed her at an immense distance from his sublime self. But he could not help observing that his brother's name was now never mentioned ; and his passion increasing with every interview with the beautiful Adelaide, he began to perceive that the plot, which at first amused him at the expence of the plotter, might be the destruction of his hopes. He resolved, therefore, to counteract it by a *coup de grace* of his own.

No subject could be more appropriate to the evening shade of our beautiful woods ; none more acceptable to Ninon's secret wishes ; none more agreeable to the plan of her flighty friend than love.

The Chevalier had, with wonderful eloquence, enlarged on all the progressions of that universal passion ; he had adverted to the hopes, the fears, the jealousy, the solicitude of its various stages, with an energy, tenderness, and feeling that affected Ninon to tears ; and " bless me," thought Charlotte, " is my fiction become reality with him ? He could not talk thus if he did not feel, and if so, what an elucidation of the problem ' do not evil that good may come of it ! ' which had by turns so puzzled and pleased her ?

But no such elucidation awaited poor Charlotte : not only the superior art, but malice of the Chevalier, was on the point of overwhelming her with confusion.

Three delightful evenings had he amused himself at the expence of the two young ladies ;

ladies ; on the fourth, when the eyes of Ninon moistened at descriptions of tenderness and passion, of which, though the Chevalier was not the object, she felt the full force, he threw himself at the feet of the two arm-in-arm friends, and, in all the excess of a passion he had portrayed with so much interest, and real tears, implored them to assist his addresses to Adelaide, the beautiful, the adored Adelaide, for whom only he existed, and without whom, life and all its fair prospects would be hateful. The amiable Ninon, the affianced bride of his brother, his charming sister, would not surely refuse his humble prayer ; and as to Miss St. Herman, *he knew her.* -

It is but just to say, no envy or disappointed vanity mingled with the amazement of Ninon. What she could not understand was the fallibility of Charlotte's judgement, supported, as she had made it appear, by so many incontestible proofs ; but though amazement was the least painful sensation which this *dénoûment* was fated

to inflict, that was far from being dissipated by the disconcerted, angry, and terrified countenance of her friend. This was indeed a fearful moment for Charlotte ; all her Spanish castles were levelled, and the Talisman against self-reproach broken to atoms.

The Chevalier, the hateful seducer of her understanding, by whom she had been made an instrument to torture her best friends, was now, in the plenitude of superior cunning, enjoying a triumph which the affected humility of his posture could not conceal.

It was too much ; her high spirit, mortified, not subdued, burst out in bitter accusations of herself, and not less bitter reflections on him. Accusation was retorted with recrimination ; and cool sarcastic contempt, on the part of the Chevalier, provoked the anger, rage, and resentment of Charlotte out of all bounds of prudence or self-respect ; each, regardless of the petrified witness of their mutual violence, and the secret it disclosed, till recalled to
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the usual consequence of vindictive passion "repentance," by the agonies of the injured Ninon.

"Barbarous Charlotte!" she exclaimed, "to what a refinement of cruelty have you carried imposition, for the wanton purpose of torturing a heart whose only offence towards you was simple affection! You have not only degraded yourself by rendering one who never injured you miserable and ridiculous; but you have made me a curse to the man for whom I could die, and the woman I most respect. Well, may the daughter of the Marquise de Courville be inaccessible to the little mischievous citizen. But I fly to her; yes, it is at her feet I will declare my ignorance and my innocence. But the *Comte*, Oh, where shall I find *him*? What language will suffice to paint my despair to *him*? what humiliation will atone for my presumption? and must I then cease to love, to adore *him*?"

It was now, while Charlotte traversed the path in agitation and agony; the Chevalier's

turn to be confounded. A single hope, inspired by the last sentiment, which was forced by anguish from the heart of the little citizen, only consoled him. Had this been a time to wonder, it would have been excited by sentiment of any kind from Ninon. He suspected no such thing from her head or her heart, much less had he hoped that she loved any thing in the alliance with his brother but rank, shew, and title, or had any stronger motive than pride and ambition.

It was this idea that gave importance to the scheme of the poor disappointed Charlotte. Had he penetrated the secret of Ninon's heart, had he suspected her principles and understanding, Charlotte might have dreamed on without a *dénoûment*, which, but for the single hope inspired by Ninon's evident attachment to his brother, must have covered him with shame and despair.

Instead, however, of giving himself up to passion, like his former ally, he had
once

once more recourse to *finesse*, and hoped, on the old ground of believing what we wish, that having flattered Ninon into renewed confidence, it would be easy to reconcile her to a jest which had, he declared, in fact equally imposed on his brother, when he acceded to the treaty, the completing of which was now his most passionate desire; and he appealed, with an air of the most perfect sincerity, to her own recollection of the personal attentions of the *Comte*, even in the presence of *Mademoiselle de Courville*, with whom his intended union was a mere family arrangement, without consulting the heart of either party.

Charlotte listened, almost suffocated with passion and grief, to the Chevalier's fallacious speech; but though conscious that the exposure of her second artifice would incur the resentment of the Duchess, as well as the anger of her mother, and though now too fatally convinced it was not right to "do evil that good might come of it," she

she disdained to take a lesson from his artful look, or to become a sharer in any of his future plans.

“ And you dare, Sir,” said she, “ to call that a *jest*, which destroys the peace of your own respectable family—that renders them miserable in the present, and hopeless in the future—that exiles your elder brother, alienates the affection of his friends, and tears from him his dearest and most cherished hope—that even deranges the intellects of the angel you pretend to adore ?”

“ Terrible, terrible !” exclaimed Ninon, gasping for breath. “ Oh, Charlotte ! you who can paint so well, whose enchanting imagery has destroyed every real hope in my poor heart, complete the picture ; add to it, the miserable Ninon, criminal only in presuming to love, and ambitious to emulate the perfect beings with whom it was her fate to become an humble associate—paint her heart, though pierced with a cruel *jest*, still turning with affection to the
hand

hand which inflicts the wound—paint too a mother, dear to her, however despised by *jesters*, changing her home, her habits, her connections; abandoning the respect of her own sort, and exposing herself to the ridicule of theirs—paint too a father, a fond, and, in his line, a respectable father, elated perhaps too much by power, by popularity, and by riches, but ready to sacrifice all to the happiness of his only child, that child—— But, Charlotte, *I* am *no* painter, and I do not even wish you to picture to *yourself* the suffering of that child.—Oh no! it would grieve *you*, without relieving me. My heart is indeed pierced: alas! when was the moment that I was not sensible of its inferiority. But since it is not for me, since *I* cannot make the *Comte* happy, he shall at least cease to curse the vain ambitious victim of a *jest*; yes, yes, I resign him. I go to the Duchess, I will implore her to send me back to my deceived parents. I will kneel to the dear, the gentle Adelaide: my tears, my agonies,

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shall prove me guiltless; and I will pray for you all."

She was hastily leaving the confounded guilt-struck pair, but returned.

"But if you, I address you, Chevalier, as well as Charlotte, if you do not betray yourselves, remember you are safe with me. I am indeed wretched. I shall return to my parents: but my heart has now no home. You shall, however, not commemorate the entrance of a citizen's daughter into the house of a Noble, by any mortification on her account;" and she left them with such a dignified air of mingled grief and resentment, as even confounded the Chevalier.

As to Charlotte, she had been so much in the habit of amusing herself with the little citizen, of laughing at her ignorance, and imposing on her credulity, that she had not left herself leisure to observe the profound attention with which Ninon had shared in her lessons, and listened to the sentiments of refined delicacy and virtuous enthusiasm, which, after a visit from the

Duchess, we all delighted to treasure in our memories.

It had never occurred to her, as it often had to me, that a mind so docile and naturally well inclined, could not fail gradually to improve, or that the seeds, which lay dormant in the atmosphere of vulgarity, would expand and flourish under the benign influence of superior example ; much less had she foreseen any possible incident that could fill her with respect for so insignificant a character, and cover herself with confusion.

But the little citizen was evidently no longer the unsuspecting dupe of two beings so perfectly wise in their own conceit ; on the contrary, the resentment of outraged confidence, the dignity of unoffending candour, and the grief of wounded friendship, exalted her in the same degree as it lowered them.

“ You are really a distinguished scholar in the school of mischief, Miss Charlotte

St,

St. Herman," said the Chevalier in a tone of the most provoking irony.

"And you, most noble Chevalier Philip de Verencourt," retorted she in the same tone, "are no doubt sensible of the credit due to the master of such a scholar."

The Chevalier shrugged his shoulders.—
"There is yet a consolation," said he, "in all this."

"No doubt, Sir; you will have your *cong  *, and be at liberty to pursue such plans as suit your enterprising genius, to the disarrangement of whatever family are simple enough to become your dupes."

"Yes, and the *disarrangement* in this family is, I presume, a subject of great affliction to the humble Madame St. Herman and her merry daughter; they must, however, bear it."

"That, Sir, is not so certain: the peace of this family will be restored; the humble Madame St. Herman will rejoice; and her daughter will be too happy to be merry,
except

except at the expence of the disappointed Chevalier."

" Ah ! she is an enchantingly obliging creature ; and the Chevalier, this disappointed despised Chevalier, will be too happy to contribute to her amusement, in any other character than that designed by the delightful family compact, which he has so unfortunately broken."

" You are too witty to be intelligible, Sir, else I might perhaps hope you would have the goodness to let me compréhend you."

" Amiable ignorance ! You have not then been informed by that excellent manager, your mamma, that I, wretch as I am, only *second* son to the Duke de Verencourt, was destined, by my good mother-in-law, to the honour of espousing the daughter of the felon St. Herman ? Your mamma, Miss, will tell you all about it."

" The felon St. Herman !" repeated Charlotte, out of breath, and unable to utter the bursting sensations of her heart.

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The Chevalier, as little disposed to compassionate, and to respect the feelings of one whom he knew to be an obstinate enemy to that cast on which he set his life, proceeded.

“ Yes ; and when the world shall have traced the meanders of that pretty heart to its source, what infinite subject of curious investigation will it not afford ? After having imposed on the little citizen a lover she dreamed not of ; after managing so adroitly with the great man her father ; after reconciling so many contending parties ; it is no sooner understood that the despised Chevalier is no longer to be considered as the destined spouse of the daughter of Madame St. Herman, and the felon her husband, than your little wits are set to work to disconcert an arrangement sanctioned by the two families on whom you are dependant. Upon my honour, Miss, you surpass yourself, and your reward will no doubt be appropriate. I know not indeed how I could exist if a *lettre de cachet* should convey
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that adorable person out of the knowledge of the friends you have so well served."

"That is a happy country where it is not permitted to *speak*, of what it is not permitted to *do*; but it is neither the fear of injustice nor the comments of the world," answered Charlotte, a little recovered, "that disconcerts me at this moment. I submit to any punishment, none can be too severe, for having suffered myself to be led into complicated error by a mind so despicable; but I owe it to the managing Madame St. Herman, to her merry daughter, to——"

"Oh, let me beseech you," interrupted the Chevalier, do not omit the felon St. Herman."

Warm as was the natural temper of Charlotte, she could now despise so unmanly an insult, and scornfully answered—

"By whatever epithet you chuse to distinguish a father, of whose virtues or vices I am equally ignorant——"

"Pitiable! as to the former, which are no doubt innumerable, and as to the latter,
this

this ignorance so convenient and *a-propos*, will fail, I fear, of the credit it deserves."

"It was my ignorance only, Chevalier, that first rendered me the dupe of your arts, and it is that which exposes me now to your unmanly rudeness; but if indeed such arrangements were ever meant to take place, as those you hint, I stoop to beg you will believe it was never communicated to me, and I swear, in the presence of God, that considering the Chevalier in the light of a person destined to ennoble the poor dependant Charlotte St. Herman, he is, though second son to the Duke de V. my abhorrence and contempt."

The Chevalier protested his incredulity; it was above his moderate understanding to comprehend how Madame St. Herman, who was to the Duchess a second self, and who lived in habits of maternal and open confidence with her daughter, could conceal from her a secret of such importance.—
"But," he added, "be that as it may, the sentiment I feel for you, my pretty bride,
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that never would have been, is so congenial to your own, that I have no objection to join with you in an oath of eternal hatred ; though at the same time, *entre nous*, as we succeeded so well in deceiving the little citizen, it would be creditable to our politics, if, without abating a particle of mutual hatred, we united in a scheme of pacification. What you won't? Well, as you please ; but I warn you of the entertainment you will afford the world."

" Begone, Sir."

" Ah, what majesty ! what *becoming* dignity ! Shall I introduce you to the *tragedie* ? Seriously, as an actress, one might endure your fine spirit ; and these creatures are not altogether contemptible, they hold a certain rank ; but you perhaps prefer the *comédie*. Now there you are wrong. I beseech you do not mar your native grace by such velocity of movement ; you are really too precipitate."

Charlotte, unable either to repress or conceal her tears, left him to his spiteful triumph,

triumph, and reached her chamber in a convulsion of contending passions.

It was only since Adelaide's illness, that I had prevailed on myself to sadden one hour of my poor girl's happy existence, by giving her an outline of the misfortunes of the early part of my life, with such partial reservation as related to the vices of *her* father, and the prepossession, which yielded not to time, of the supernatural appearance of *mine*; neither had I touched on the remediless sorrows which recurred as often as I thought on my lost son.

But, that we were indebted to the noble family of De Verencourt, for the delicate distinctions of unreserved confidence and friendship; for the ample independence, willed us by the father and mother of my Julia; and for a thousand nameless blessings which gave us respect with others, as well as comfort to ourselves, was a part of my history, no injunction of our friends could prevail on me to conceal from my daughter; but though she could therefore understand
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and despise the allusions of the Chevalier to our dependance on his family, it was not more new to her to hear of the *management* of her mother, than of the felony of her father : it was of the goodness only of the former she had heard, of the latter she had indeed every thing to learn.

“The Chevalier de V. ennoble the daughter of the felon St. Herman !”—The world too, he had menaced her with the comments of the world ! Impertinent and idle, how could the world wound a mind at peace with itself ? But her’s had deviated from the plain onward path of sincerity, and was of course its own accuser. She had even disobeyed her mother, and been punished in the very letter of her offence, by hearing that mother named with disrespect.

But never, never would she forget the corrections and humiliation of this day ; never more cease to emulate the sincerity of her only parent—the noble frankness of the Duchess—the ingenuity of Adelaide—and even the simple integrity of Ninon ; yes,

the infliction of this day, on her heart, was indeed never forgotten. The prospects of Adelaide might be bettered ; but Ninon, her sentiments, her manners, and, spite of feeling love and regret, her resolute justice, was a study worth copying. And how could she ever pardon herself for afflicting a creature so amiable, so innocent, and inoffensive !

“ This poor little body,” would she use to say, “ this daughter of Monsieur *L’Avocat*, her folly is ambition ; she is not ill-natured, she is only silly ; she wishes to be on certain terms with people of rank ; I amuse myself without by any means hating her ; but in the mortifying retrospect of this day where was her silliness ? Good nature indeed was still her predominate feature ; and her mind, it was plain, knew other distinctions than those suggested by ambition. At all events, Miss, the daughter of Monsieur *L’Avocat*, must have precedence of Miss, daughter of Monsieur *Le Felon*.

“ But

“ But can this be ? ” continued the mortified Charlotte. “ My mamma, the Chevalier said, could tell me all ; but shall I wound her by a repetition of insults she has not provoked, and cannot deserve ? and, after all the dependant Charlotte St. Herman can say, will he not still be son to the Duke de V. ? and will not such a repetition wound his parent as well as mine ? But my father, the felon ! yes, I must implore my mother to acquaint me more with him.”

Hastening to my apartment, she passed the door of the dressing-room occupied by Ninon. It was put too, without being closed. She saw her with writing implements before her, and heard her sob.

The whim and spirit of Charlotte St. Herman, of which she had herself no small opinion, was such as followed self-applause, with self-reproach ; for, as in her most innocent vagary, the laugh must be at the expence of somebody, that somebody was

sure to be avenged by her immediate regret.

The sobs of poor Ninon superseded the *felon* St. Herman. She entered the apartment. The tears, that had slowly dropped on the paper, now flowed; and though no word was spoken, self-reproach filled the heart of Charlotte, and she wept also.

“ Oh Charlotte, dear Charlotte !” said Ninon, “ what could I have done to provoke you to such an act of cruelty ? Yet if you had amused yourself at my expence only, I could have forgiven you ; but to inflict misery on the *Comte*, and make me the means, Oh Charlotte ! how can I forgive that ? or how indeed can you forgive yourself ?”

“ That I never can do,” replied Charlotte ; “ and acute as you now feel it, you will have long forgotten the error of my conduct, before I shall myself cease to deplore it with the most poignant regret. But if there is a possible palliation, it must be admitted in my entire ignorance, that
your

your heart was at all interested in the business."

Ninon blushed scarlet deep.—“ Do not, Miss St. Herman,” said she, “ let me suppose you mean to add insult to injury. ‘ *My heart not interested!* ’—And is it with such sentiments *you* will give *your* hand? Ah! how little do you know of me! Had I not been assured that the attachment of the Count to Mademoiselle de Courville was that of a good brother to an amiable sister, and had not the avowal of far different sentiments for me, come from one on whose veracity I would have staked my life, believe not that my poor heart would have been the price of vain glory: it is only when rank and title are ornamented, as by the Duke and Duchess de V. not when they ornament, as in the Duke and Duchess P. that I feel and venerate the superiority of the possessors.”

Heavens and earth! could Charlotte believe her own faculties? Was this the little Ninon Chevereux?

She proceeded.—“ I have always loved you, Charlotte ; even now, when I cannot be deceived in your motive for indulging me with your intimacy and visits ; when I feel your inducement was to ridicule people and manners, which, though new to you, are not uncommon, nor always without traits of the same sentiments which are seen in more polished circles with admiration and respect, still I love you. But the objects of your mirth could not be more new to you, than you and your friends were to me. You imagined perhaps it was the high titles of Duchess, of Marquise, of Comte, that attracted me ; no, no, it was the mind, the manners, it was the axioms, carried into action, of delicate integrity, of virtuous refinement, and of benevolent equanimity, that engrossed my attention, and filled me with the excess of the two contrary emotions, awe, and affection. You were indeed all new, and all delightful to me. While I was permitted to share in the instructions you received under the wise regulations

regulations of Madame St. Herman, and listened with eager attention to her, it was not actual stupidity, but admiration and respect, that gave me an automaton appearance. The intercourse with you disqualified me for that of my equals ; but I could for ever have admired the graceful elegance of the *Comte* de V.'s person, and fancied I read the emanation of a noble heart in his countenance ; perhaps sighed at the impossibility of meeting his likeness in my rank ; but never would presumption have carried me farther. But when my unpractised heart was dazzled with the brilliant picture, which would raise my humble pretensions, and in time give me rank among those I loved and admired, it seemed to comprise every thing delightful on earth ; and the *Comte*, amiable as he is, was at first the mere auxiliary of my ambition, to rank among the virtues, not the splendour of the De Verencourts : and when once my willing mind was tempered by *jesters*, for self-deception, how could I resist impressions

from person and mind, when I became every interview more sensible that both were perfect?"

"Ninon," said the astonished Charlotte, "where have you, or where have I been, that you break on me with such radiance? How have you managed to conceal——"

"I am not equal to any management," interrupted Ninon. "I have been satisfied to feel the sentiments inspired in your society, without expressing them; and all my self-respect has hitherto arisen from my profound admiration of those with whom I had the honour to associate in the Convent of the Assumption. But whatever I may suffer, and indeed I do suffer, will be overbalanced by the mental information I have gleaned there, if in the wreck of hope and peace I still preserve *you*."

The peculiar situation of this amiable girl, her unaccusing spirit, her tears, and the air of humble candour with which she spoke, were irresistible.

Charlotte, whose natural disposition was

as kind as just, flew to her embrace, and with an enthusiastic admiration, vowed the most ardent and perfect friendship.

Ninon, we will no longer call her “the *little* citizen,” did not forfeit her own self-respect in the humble and grateful manner in which she accepted the professions of her friend ; but immediately entered on the subject next her heart, which was that of repairing the injury, which she accused herself of having offered Adelaide and the *Comte*.

The first preliminary to general pacification was to reconcile Monsieur, or rather Madame Chevereux, to the disappointment ; for notwithstanding the expected rank, and, as her father supposed, happiness, of his beloved Ninon, which was in part purchased by his silence as well as money, the dear delight of haranguing the parliament ; of talking six hours on a subject nobody understood, himself least of all ; the applause and admiration, which followed the

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printing,

printing, and registering the speeches, which in composing left his spouse night after night to solitary blessedness, were all objects of more value than a crown; such a crown at least, as then pressed the aching temples of the *Grande Monarque*. But Ninon, what were crowns, parliaments, or even speeches, registered, printed, and greedily purchased from the hawkers, to the gratification of Ninon?

All this she knew. Her resolution to give the *Comte* up, had not once wavered from the moment she discovered his heart was not her's; and the female who can persevere in such a resolution, will not shrink from common difficulties. Her first intention on leaving the *jesters*, was to solicit an interview with Adelaide: but before she reached the *chatcau*, it was the *Comte*, his feelings, and his happiness, that became her first object; and Charlotte found her bathing a letter she was addressing to him with tears, which she considered

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as an oblation to honour, as well as equity and peace.

“ Did I ever,” said she, “ pray for any thing so ardently as the power of giving happiness to the *Comte*? Go, happy paper, these characters at least, traced by poor Ninon, will be welcome: he will receive it with transport to his bosom; he will kiss the passport to liberty and love, and he will forgive her who has so innocently afflicted him.”

“ Let us read it, however,” said Charlotte, “ before it is sealed.

“ No,” answered Ninon gravely, “ it is too serious for you.”

“ Ninon,” said Charlotte equally grave, “ you have not forgiven me !”

“ Yes,” replied the innocent girl, dispersing the gathering tears, “ yes, I both forgive and love you; but this letter is from *my* heart to the *heart* of the *Comte* de V. It was fit for me only to write—it is fit for him only to read;” and after immediately

sealing it, she requested Charlotte to conduct her to the apartment of Adelaide.

From the moment when Charlotte began to dream, as the Chevalier aptly phrased it, of undoing what he had so well taught her to do, she became a mystery, which Adelaide, in her then state of mind, scarce condescended to observe, much less endeavoured to develope. Nothing indeed could exceed the tenderness and solicitude of Charlotte's manner; but her visits to her melancholy friend were now generally after the family retired. She was in the day time constantly attending the motions of Ninon; and the Chevalier was their inseparable escort. This was odd; but the impression it left on Adelaide was very transient, and even the resolution to improve her natural advantages over so unequal a rival, had already been superseded by habitual melancholy and languor.

Adelaide had no pretensions to heroism: the heroine of this episode, I had almost
said

said of this history, is " the little citizen." The entrance of Ninon and Charlotte, arm-in-arm, was not a surprise of the most pleasant nature: it tinted her cheek with a faint blush, and she involuntarily turned away her face.

Ninon's was the courage of sentiment, not action. She shrunk back, but again recollecting the solemn engagement just sealed to the *Comte*, she rushed forward, fell on her knees, and burst into tears.

It was with great difficulty the weak spirits of Adelaide resisted the nervous affection that operated by example. She applied to her volatiles, and reclined her head on her folded arms.

Her interesting, pale, melancholy, and emaciated figure, always deeply affected Charlotte.

" It is I," said she, throwing herself at the feet of Adelaide, " it is I who ought to kneel; it is I who deserve the torture I feel at this moment; and it is I who
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am for ever lost if I do not see my friends restored to that happiness, of which my conceit and folly have helped to deprive them. Oh, Adelaide, forgive me !”

“ Forgive you, Charlotte ! have I not already forgiven and pitied you ; but Mademoiselle Chevereux, what makes her kneel and weep ? She has not injured me, and, sure I am, I have not injured her. Who is happy if she is not ?”

Ninon still wept. She wanted not language to confound, or dignity to resent, in the presence of the Chevalier and Charlotte ; but, before the pale shade of the late so beautiful Adelaide, and no longer animated by sense of injury, her natural timidity returned. She arose, and not being asked to sit, stood abashed and trembling, like an accused, and, perhaps, guilty creature before a severe judge.

Adelaide would have retired from a scene she could not comprehend, but Charlotte, eager to announce returning hope, even at the expence of her own
little

little remaining credit, did full justice to the heroism of Ninon, who, overcome with the variety of emotions renewed by Charlotte's recital, was only preserved from sinking, by resting on the back of Adelaide's chair.

“ And did they think,” said Adelaide, struck with indignant amazement at hearing the Court arrangement for the Chevalier, “ *could* they think, if duty compelled me to acquiesce with the barbarous policy of interest and ambition, that, after so wounding my heart, after resigning my own choice, I would submit to their's, and accept a man of plots, of intrigue, of contrivances, and insincerity, as a substitute for the honourable and noble *Comte de Verencourt* ?”

Ninon, still weeping, rested on Adelaide's chair; Charlotte was seated; and Adelaide speaking with more energy than we had lately witnessed; when the Duchess and myself entered the apartment.

The first object that struck us was the situation

situation of our little visitor, whose in-offensive manners, unaffected modesty, and sweet temper, had already changed the coldness, with which she was at first regarded, into esteem, and even affection.

The Duchess was surprised and displeased. She drew a chair near herself, for Ninon, and angrily demanded of Charlotte, on what precedent audience was given to invited guests, in that *well-bred* way.

The energy of Adelaide was far from subsiding. Her cheeks were still flushed, and, notwithstanding the affection and respect she always felt for the Duchess, she could not, in that moment, help considering her as one of the counsel who condemned her to be the wife of the Chevalier de Verencourt.

Ninon, far more oppressed by the condescension of the Duchess than any fancied slight from Adelaide, could not help adverting to the sentiments of that noble woman, when leaving the saloon to pay daily visits in this chamber.

“ How

“How,” thought she, “must she have loathed and detested the encroacher, whose apparent vanity forced obscurity on her family.”

Traces of uncommon emotion were so visible in the countenance of Charlotte, that I trembled lest some new caprice of her's should have occasioned the extraordinary situation in which we found them; but, thank Heaven, no such thing transpired!

Ninon, by degrees, recovered her contented, serene expression of countenance; Charlotte folded her arms, her usual attitude when in particular good humour; Adelaide, instead of retiring, moved her seat to the other side of Ninon, and, though a tear did glisten in her eye as she took her hand, the smile that accompanied the action gratified us all.

The Duchess, forgetting her transient displeasure, now told us that no less than four expresses had arrived from Versailles since day-break: two of which the Chevalier, who had opened them all, charged himself

himself with delivering to the Duke, who was still in his province.

“ We have yet,” said she, “ passed but one month in this sweet retirement, and we are already menaced with a recall. There has been a riot in Paris, and the army is in motion.”

“ The army !” exclaimed Adelaide, turning pale : and the eyes of Ninon repeated “ the army ;” but, correcting the involuntary impulse, she remembered her parents were in the capital, and anxiously enquired what had happened ?

“ Something,” the Duchess replied, “ had enraged the people about Revellion, the paper maker, whose manufactory was burned, and himself, it was feared, destroyed. That bad man, D’O. was suspected of——.”

“ The Sieur Revellion,” interrupted Ninon, “ is a particular friend of my father’s. I hope——.”

“ Make yourself easy,” replied the Duchess, “ your father is now, you know, a Courtier.”

Ninon

Ninon blushed. She doubted her power to reconcile her father to the deprivation of what had made him a Courtier; and she still more doubted whether any power could continue him one, after such deprivation.

“If my father,” said she, “would be influenced by his daughter, he would never be other than what the Duchess de Verencourt pronounced exactly right.”

“You are a good girl,” said the Duchess, rising to return her salute as she left the apartment, accompanied by Charlotte.—“This child,” continued the Duchess, “is really amiable. She would be very dear to me in any other character than that for which she seemed to be destined.”

Adelaide was lost in thought. We courted her to walk. I saw by the impatience of her negative she had some other object in view, and therefore proposed her following us, to which the Duchess acceded.

The chamber of Ninon was now become
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the scene of innumerable debates, without a single conclusion; but, while her tears flowed incessantly, she betrayed not the smallest indication of regret on her own account—all that occupied her seemed to be the restoration of the amiable *Comte* to his former situation with Adelaide, without enraging her father, or, by rendering him an enemy to government, mortally offend the guarantees of his pecuniary engagements. But it was not for such simple politicians to satisfy themselves, much less others, in a matter of such importance, however cleverly they decided on affairs of the heart. A soft tap at the door preceded the entrance of Adelaide, to whom, the unusual exercise of crossing two corridors through a long gallery, was a journey of fatigue.

You will have understood, Lady N., the thoughtful turn of this young lady. She had seriously pondered on the situation of the *Comte* in respect to his King, his father, and herself. If her attachment to him had
been

been a common one, she might have wept and secretly mourned their separation; but her own will would never have opposed the determination of her friends. When, however, the new engagement with the Chevereuxs was allowed to supersede that with her, on motives, and under authority, so perfectly new; and when, as she appeared to find support in pride and resentment, she was suffered to remain fixed in the angry conviction that the *Comte* himself assented to the change; she reflected and resented, till slighted love and wounded sensibility affected her reason, and too late discovered to her friends the mistake of their conduct. Lost to all interest in the world, insensible to the caresses of those she had before loved, indifferent to place and situation; if she dressed it was without care; if she sat at table it was without appetite; her walk was without object, and her life without one gleam of comfort.

Suddenly the *Comte* appeared before her. She did not notice him. He knelt.

She

She would have passed him. He wept. Her eyes were “fixed on vacancy.”—“Adelaide!” he cried. She stopped.—“My own Adelaide!”—She sunk into his arms, and, for the first time, her disordered brain was relieved by tears.

Restored to the renewed confidence of love, and when reason resumed its function, she was astonished that a doubt of the heart, she had so long studied, could once have annoyed her, and peace was restored to her agitated bosom in the moment of renovated confidence.

The Duchess had talked of the quietude of her retreat. Alas! she knew not that quietude was no longer to be found any where in France. She had heard, indeed, that her province was in an actual state of rebellion; but the roar of anarchy had not yet, it is true, been heard in our demesnes—it had not yet invaded the sacred retreat of unoffending females; but the vassals, hitherto so zealous and faithful, were in equal danger from the fascination of example, and from
the

the threats of their more desperate equals : so that our *chateau*, though it was a secret carefully guarded from us, was in an actual, though private, state of defence.

In Languedoc it could be no longer concealed, that the once popular and adored Duke de V. was blended with the other Nobles, who, not having protested against the odious *Courpleniére*, were considered to have supported it, and, more than once, he had owed the preservation of his life, to the fidelity of a few of his ancient adherents at the eminent risk of their own ; of this the Chevalier was informed when he set off to join his father, though he told the Duchess that his motive was to deliver the packets from Versailles.

Adelaide had heard from her terrified *femme de chambre*, an incoherent account of the danger that surrounded them, and she had just enough knowledge of politics to feel the wisdom, as well as necessity, of union in every branch, private as well as public, of a state so convulsed. The army

was indeed said to be gathering ; but it was an admitted fact, on which every peasant, and even her *femme de chambre*, could be eloquent, that the public credit was broken, and that there was no possible means of raising money to pay those troops so necessary for the protection of the well-disposed.

Often, during these reflections, did the precedent of the little Chevereux recur to her as a stimulus to an actual duty.

“ What,” said she, “ is birth, if the daughter of the Marquis de Courville has not fortitude to adopt the example of the daughter of an advocate, the grandchild of a mechanic ?” and true it was that her heart sunk at a sacrifice so recently and so nobly made, by one whom she had been in the habit of considering as much beneath her in mind as in rank.

But the affecting conduct of Ninon raised her beyond emulation.

“ Amiable girl !” said Adelaide, “ she performs a severe duty ; her passions are subjugated to her reason. I fly to respect,

to embrace, to love her! but, oh, my friend, my beloved, not to resign thee to her!"

The meeting was embarrassing. Adelaide blushed under the fancied superiority of Ninon's mind; and Ninon felt she was in the presence of a being who must be as superior in merit as in happiness; for, was she not the beloved of the first of men, of De Verencourt? The restraint, however, was but momentary; and when did there assemble a trio with hearts more pure, more amiable, or more virtuous?

The two counsellors, now assisted by a third, resumed the subject of their deliberation; but, after *pros* and *cons* without number, Charlotte advised leaving the events, they could not influence, to Providence.

"You, Ninon," said she, "have yet another month to remain here; the Comte will still be absent—so, thank Heaven, will the Chevalier: this, at least, gives us time, and, when we return to Paris, we will dress

mamma to the admiration of her city friends, and you shall coax papa to the admiration of the Court."

"It is you who can do all this," answered Ninon, "you are so great a favourite, and if you would but pay us a visit."

"A visit! I'll stay with you seven years, and seven to that."

"You promise well, my dear Charlotte."

"You shall see I will perform better, my dear Ninon."

"And leave me?" joined Adelaide.

"You will have your Count, while Ninon and I qualify for single blessedness."

Charmed with the promise of the saucy Charlotte to become, at least for some time, an inmate with her, relieved from the painful necessity of banishing herself from a society which so enchanted, and returning to that which so disgusted her, Ninon thought no more of the wanton *jest* that fixed a certain sorrow in her heart, since that sorrow was alleviated by the interest it gave her in a family she almost

almost worshipped, and it secured a knowledge of the future fate of the amiable man, for whom, in the midst of her heroism, she could not help sighing.

A trampling of horses drew them, in that moment, to a window commanding the avenue, the Duke, the Chevalier, and a numerous suit, hastily approached the *chateau*. The former was summoned to be present at the grand meeting of the States on the fifth of May; this was the second, and the scenes he had witnessed, as well as the dangers he had escaped, determined him no more to separate from his Duchess.

Apprehension, anger, and grief, overcast his fine countenance. In his native province all order was at an end; the riots at Paris were becoming every day more serious; terror spread her banner universally; and you may conceive our's, when informed of the precautions taken by the Duke's order for our security, at a time, when the last thing we suspected was the actual danger that surrounded us.

Carriages were immediately ordered for the whole family; our attendants all carried concealed arms; and our removal had more the appearance of flight from a merciless army, than leaving a summer *chateau* to reside near a Court.

The Duke handed his beloved wife and myself into the carriage, with visible emotion; the young ladies, with their attendants, followed. I observed the Duke very particular in his private direction to Bolarde, the Languedoc *maitre d'hotel*, whom he had brought with him to the *chateau*, and whom he left there when he quitted it.

During our hasty journey, the Duke vainly endeavoured to conceal the anxiety which might be naturally expected, to affect a Noble, who had so great a stake in the country; and who was bound to its prosperity by principle as well as interest; but I observed enough to convince me he was providing against a storm. The accumulations of his own fortune had been
already

already given to the exigencies of the state; what the Duchess inherited from her parents were yet in her coffers; how long they might safely continue there, was, perhaps, the subject of the Duke's private consultations with Bolarde. Madame de V.'s jewels were with us, and the Duke hinted that his ultimate directions depended on circumstances; in some possible contingencies Bolarde would make investures in the Dutch and English funds for his Julia.

“ Oh, for Heaven's sake !” cried she, “ do not believe so terrifying a precaution can ever be necessary. We can never forsake our country, nor can the infatuated people always forget, it is the Bourbons, a race of heroes, their natural Lords, and the glory of France, whom they oppose.”

“ Ah, my Julia !” replied the Duke, “ the sun of that race is, I fear, setting in darkness. I cannot, indeed, forsake my King, nor dare I think on the fatal necessity that may oblige me to commit

my best treasure to another country: myself, my sons, my fortune, are my sovereigns; my Julia is mine, and I will not forget what is due to her."

Engrossed by this melancholy theme on the road, and hearing, at every post, of the disorders that agitated Paris, on one hand, and the storm that rolled from the distant provinces towards the capital, on the other, we arrived at Versailles on the fourth of May, indisposed, enervated, and almost out of hope.

The alteration which a few short months had effected in Paris is incredible. The most respectable of the citizens considered themselves as attacked in the person of Revellion, whose fine manufactory of paper, which employed some hundreds of men, women, and children, was burned to the ground. He had accused the Abbe Roy, a favourite of Monsieur, of cheating him. — "Behold," said the citizens, "the manner in which the Abbe proves his innocence. This is the work of the Court."

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The Court, however, disavowed the infamous transaction, and accused the citizens themselves, of irritating the mob to acts of violence; while a third, not less respectable, party charged the whole to a set of desperadoes, whose harvest is a subversion of all law, and who were the secret implements of faction. But, whatever the cause, Paris was in tumults, commerce at a stand, confidence broken, and good neighbourhood changed to vindictive quarrels—all was discontent and confusion.

After stopping one hour at the Palais de V. we proceeded to Versailles, and arrived on the eve of the day when the meeting of the states was to be opened by high mass, at which the four great bodies of government assisted; but, alas, few now live to speak of its magnificence!

Oh! how awful is the retrospect of that event, when the King, the Royal Family, the Nobles, the Clergy, and the Commons, joined in the worship of one God. The church, which shone in splendour and

beauty, resounded with loyal acclamations, which were repeated by the surrounding crowds who could not get in. The Nobles, as well as Royal Family, were decked in gold and jewels, and an indiscriminate mixture of all ranks thronged the house of God, to pray for that Monarch they afterwards so inhumanly murdered!

Among the crowds who left Paris to witness a scene so grand and *nouvelle*, were Madame Chevereux, and her friends the Demanche, whose jewels and fine clothes were almost as attractive as any in the church, but who, notwithstanding, were nearly pressed to death by their fellow-citizens.

Ninon, whom we did not suffer to leave us till after the show, returned, with Charlotte and her transported mother, to their new hotel. Madame Chevereux, indeed, had witnessed a sight infinitely more to her *gout* than royalty itself: this was Ninon seated behind the Duchess, with Adelaide and Charlotte, a distinction, she regretted,
the

the crowd prevented her from pointing to all her friends; her coach-horses were, however, not suffered to rest one moment till she had described the spectacle to every being of her numerous acquaintance, with Ninon and the Duchess de V. in the foreground of the picture, and with a rapture so exquisite, that she resolved to enquire of her husband, the moment of his return to Paris, when she would be mother to a Countess?—but Monsieur, when that happened, was not in the best of possible humours.

The meeting of the States, on which the salvation of the King and people was to depend, commenced with a discussion that promised very little for unanimity. The rumour of the day was, “that the meeting was convened at Versailles, for the purpose of uniting the Nobility and Clergy to the exclusion of the *tiers état*,” and this was called “the Court plot;” but if such a plot ever did exist, the Clergy took especial care not to make themselves a party in it. It

was for that venerable body alone, headed by the Duc d'Orleans and his friends, to strike the first blow towards the ruin of their country, by forsaking their proper compeers, and becoming an indivisible body with the Commons.

In the debates on this occasion, Monsieur Chevereux had, to his great mortification, remained silent. He, by no means, relished being, as he said, "a nobody."—Arguments, many and potent, had passed the coinage of his brain, on the popular side of the question, and almost as many on that of the Court, which, not having made up his mind to one party or the other, were of course lost, and that, too, in the critical moment, when the speeches of his less eloquent compeers were followed with bursts of applause. He was pondering on these causes and effects, when his spouse met him with her pre-concerted question—"When shall I be mother to a Countess?"

"I will know before sunset to-morrow," replied he, and he hastened to demand a categorical

categorical answer of the minister respecting his daughter's marriage.

"The Comte," answered the minister, "is with the army."

"No matter; the army can, and we cannot, do without him."

The minister would speak to the Duke.

"Do so," replied the arrogant orator, "and let him know the marriage must take place within eight days, or be given up."

The Duke, who knew how much the King felt at the disappointment of his hope to influence the States by his presence, and that Government, no less harassed by the perfidious Clergy, than affronted by the licentious debates of the turbulent *tiers états*, besides being reduced to extremity for money, was in no situation to increase its difficulties, immediately commanded the attendance of his son.

Imagine, my dear Lady N., all that, in such a situation, could be urged to enforce duty to the best of Kings and the most affectionate of fathers---imagine all that a

minister so embarrassed, and who had so engaged himself, could plead, and you will judge of that firmness in the Comte, which, offering every sacrifice of life, rank, and fortune, deviated in no *iota* from his faith to Adelaide de Courville.

The unequivocal refusal of the Comte de V., to marry Ninon Chevereux, was followed by a *lettre de cachet* sending him to the Bastille; an order to confine Adelaide de Courville in a convent; a stoppage of the almost completed loan; and the renovated patriotism of Monsieur *l'Avocat* Chevereux.

Ignorant of all that was passing, conceive our consternation when, on returning from Bellvue, where I accompanied the Duchess on her visit to the Mesdames, who now occupied that beautiful seat, we heard, our dear Adelaide had been taken from her mother's apartment, who was as ignorant as ourselves of the place of her confinement, and, what almost as much affected the Duchess, was a personal affront to the Duke

Duke in a leave of absence from Court, of which he was waiting her return to avail himself, by remaining at Paris as long as the Count continued a prisoner, “and,” added the Duchess, “while Adelaide is also in confinement.”

“Charlotte had gone to Ninon, agreeable to her promise, and knew nothing of what had happened, till Madame Chevereux, who accompanied her husband to Versailles, and waited there to hear the result, returned.

“So, Miss Charlotte,” said she, “I am glad to see you can live a day from your great friends without expiring. A pretty business my spouse would have made of it, if he had not let them see he was not the cake they thought him; while Dimanche, and that meagre ugly thing, Desmoullin, were gasconading about the speeches of their silly husbands, my Monsieur Chevereux, more silly than either, held his tongue, and all for what?—A Count! a thing, that in comparison of a patriot, stands

stands for nothing. But he is dished, the fine Count! who to be sure did not chuse to marry a citizen's daughter! He is now in the Bastile; and that Mademoiselle, with her delicate white face——”

Her harangue was stopped by the fainting of Ninon, which would have been followed by the flight of Charlotte, had she not detained her by force, and had not the porter received instant orders, not to suffer her to pass without especial leave.

Monsieur *L'Avocat* had entered the hall with the eagerness of a boy going to purchase toys at a fair. He began to speak before he was well seated; and it was he, who, in the desperation of fanaticism and private pique, proposed the measure so obnoxious to the King and his Ministers, which constituted the Commons, self-created judges of the kingdom, under the title of the “National Assembly,” which he carried by a great majority, and returned home with all his blushing honours round him, to find his gate surrounded by carriages of
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medical men; his wife deafening every one with her turbulent grief; Charlotte a prisoner, and Ninon apparently dead.

The why, what, and wherefore? following the exclamations of his wife, and the agony of Charlotte, soon explained the cause of his dear Ninon's indisposition.

"You had no patience," said the weeping father to his distracted wife; "and now it is all over; I cannot retract if I would, without losing my character, and perhaps my life."

"Oh, my God!" exclaimed the wife, "do not say that; you can easily make another speech, and unsay all you——Hark! what is that?"

It was some half dozen of the Paris hawkers crying "The patriotic speech of Monsieur *L'Avocat* Chevereux, the friend of the people."

How excessive his grief, how deep his despair, since even this would not console him, till Ninon heaved a deep sigh, bled freely, and shed a shower of tears!

"I shall

“ I shall now go to my mother,” said Charlotte.

“ Indeed you shall not,” answered the mother of Ninon ; for, as my spouse said to the Minister in respect to the foolish Comte who refused his rich heiress, she can do without you, we cannot.”

Charlotte argued, wept, and I will not stake my credit that she did not scold, but all without effect.

Madame Chevereux, who in her frantic grief had torn off her diamond studded *tête*, affected, in her way, to reason.

“ You must not go,” said she, “ you *shall* stay. If Ninon recovers, she will be more glad to see you than even I ; ah ! she loves you too well ; and, you may be certain, we who punish can also reward. It was to please us the foolish Comte was sent to the Bastile.”

Charlotte, recollecting if those people could do, it was also probable they could undo, and moreover that though the *veto* of the King signified nothing, that of the wife

wife of a patriot was immutable, she composed herself for the trial, as soon as Ninon should be able to assist her.

Monsieur Chevereux, affected by her kindness, offered to read to her the points of his fine speech, an honour she declined in favour of the quietude recommended by the doctors for Ninon; so he retired with it to his closet, and read himself to sleep.

It was after the Duke's departure from Versailles that the triumph of the patriots began; and he had not left his chamber next morning, before a most affecting letter of recall was put into his hands, which he was preparing to obey, almost against the will of the grieved and angry Duchess.

"You are then," said she, "resolved to sacrifice all your feeling."

"I have no feeling now, no feeling, my Julia, but for you, and our unhappy King. The breach of this unfortunate treaty, which——"

"Was

“ Was an expedient of craft, low money-getting craft, not a treaty of honour or inclination !”

“ Granted ; but the motives were sacred, they were the comfort of my Prince, and the service of my country.”

“ And your son, a prisoner in the Bastile. Does this comfort the Prince and serve the country too ?”

“ I shall not give the example of opposing any measure of Government, however repugnant to my own private happiness.”

“ And Adelaide, too, she is also a prisoner, she who is innocent as an angel.”

“ Yes, *she is* innocent, and she will soon be restored to you, *my* angel ; but ah, Julia ! the times, the times !”

“ They cannot well be worse.”

“ Behold,” and the Duke produced the copy of the fatal decree, that insulted the laws and annihilated the royal power, the
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number of the majority, and the means by which it had been obtained, with the affecting letter of recall.—“ Think, Julia,” said he, “ you who know him, his public and private virtues—Oh, think on the King, the father, the husband, the man !”

The Duchess embraced her Lord.

“ Yes,” she replied, “ we will go to this father, this husband, this man ; your duty is to attend him, and the faithful discharge of that duty is, I well know, inseparable from your own happiness. Mine is to obey *you* : we who have been one in the bosom of peace, will not now be separated. We leave a second self in our St. Herman ; Adelaide is at least safe ; and she will have the goodness to wait here till she hears from her, or from us.”

The Duke fondly pressed her hands to his lips, and to his heart.

“ Ah Julia ! he exclaimed, “ that peace, that peace !”

“ It will again return.”

“ Not

“ Not here, not at my Castle, not at your *chateau*.

“ We will then find it in our unchangeable selves ; and St. Herman, dear St. Herman, here and hereafter *our* peace is *her's*.”

The carriage waited, and I saw them depart with an aching and almost despairing heart.

But what say you is become of Adelaide ? and it was the hopeless question I put to myself every moment till I saw her, and was answered.

The Convent La Borde stands in a close and obscure part of the city. The order is strict ; and they are in the habit of receiving state prisoners. The person of the Abbess exhibits all the deformity of pampered age ; and her countenance bears the marks of austere bigotry.

The Nuns of the Convent La Borde had all retired to their respective cells, save two favourite sisters, who, with the Abbess, and
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an Abbe, from whom they sometimes received spiritual consolation, were in the refectory, which, it not being meagre day, sent forth savory odours, when the pious quartette were disturbed by an order from Court, to take in charge the person of Adelaide de Courville.

“ Adelaide de Courville !” repeated the Abbe, “ Ah, ah, my good friends, have I then met you ?”

Adelaide was committed to the care of an old withered sybil, who, carrying a dim lamp in one hand, and telling her beads with the other, preceded her, through dark, winding, solitary aisles, every footstep reverberating on her affrighted ear, to a small Gothic door, when the livid lips of her conductress severed to pronounce—
“ Enter.”

A stone table, on which stood an old brown crucifix and a jug of water; a stool, a low wooden bedstead, the four stumps most ingeniously carved to represent devils, on which was laid a brown, or rather black
mattress,

mattress, with the rest of the bed furniture of nearly the same description, were the comforts of which poor Adelaide took the lonely possession.

It was Lord Shaftesbury's opinion that a lover is never alone, however deep his solitude; but that Lord had not been dragged from one of the most splendid palaces in France, to a dark cell in the convent La Borde; he had not been forced to listen to that effect of the wind, which, perforating the cracks of an ancient building, may be rather said to shriek and groan, than whistle; he had not, like her, been so overcome with terror and affright, as to desire nothing in nature with more earnest impatience than the sight of "the human face divine," of even such a sybil as old sister Ursula, and after all to desire in vain; no being approached, no footstep was heard.

Adelaide had passed two happy years of her life in a convent; but as light and dark could not be more different than the
Assumption

Assumption, and the La Borde, on a mental review of each, she concluded the latter to be a regular prison, and, throwing herself on the hard mattress, only wondered what crime of her's, even in thought, could have merited so severe a punishment.

The midnight vesper bell at length tolled, and her heart greeted the sound. Her tears instantly stopped.—“What could she have to fear in a community of *religieuse*, besides the dismal solitude of her cell? That, however, was sufficiently terrific. She presently heard approaching footsteps. They passed, and all was again silent. Stepping hastily to the door, the air extinguished her dim lamp. She had not noticed Ursula's locking the cell, which she now vainly tried to open. Her courage entirely failed, and her shrieks at length brought the old nun, her lamp, and her rosary to the cell door, who, in a deep sepulchral tone, demanded what was wanted?

“Ah,

the age of forty both the grace of person and sensibility of countenance, which were pre-eminent in the world of beauty, was the plainest dressed woman there ; but her natural dignity needed not ornaments, and the present visit did not stimulate the pride of the family.

The Duke and Chevalier were already seated. The latter, an immense favourite with the Chevereux, often dined *en famille* at their table, and heard rehearsals of several fine speeches intended to have been delivered by M. Chevereux, had not the expected noble alliance stopped the current of his eloquence ; and he had also been initiated by Madame C. into a history of all the fine things her new house displayed.

He was informed that she had carefully attended the sales of all the great people ; for, as M. Chevereux said in one of his speeches in the hall of justice—" The wise man stores what the fool throws away," and by that means she had procured an assemblage of elegance at half price.

Ninon

Ninon, who he ever addressed as his charming sister, with whose grace and beauty he was perfectly ravished, was sure to find him at her elbow, where, indeed, he was snugly seated, at the moment every eye was turned on his brother.

The Duchess presented the Comte to Monsieur, Madame and Mademoiselle Chevereux, and to their friends, the corn-contractor, the notary, and sausage maker.

The Comte, his spirits raised from the deepest dejection by the—"Let us see what time may do," recollected the hint respecting the concealment of his sentiments, and nothing could be more obliging than his attention to every being to whom he was presented, nor any thing more charmed than the Chevereux and their city friends.

With the rest of the company he was on the usual familiar terms of polite acquaintance; and Madame P., who had not before seen him, confessed to the Duke that *his*

son

provoking to a Nun, as to have her curiosity first excited and then disappointed, both the Abbess and the Sister were enraged. They reproached the gentle Adelaide with stubborn guilt, and, after threatening her with the question, she was re-committed to the care of Ursula.

This pleasant ceremony had been regularly repeated three days, and Adelaide, whom, even uninterrupted, meditations on the Comte; could not reconcile to so dismal a change in her situation, was, on the fourth, following the Nun, with languid steps, swollen eyes, despairing heart, and aching head, as she expected, to the Abbess and her inquisitorial coadjutors.

The parlour door did not, as usual, slowly creak on the rusty hinge; it was thrown open, and the poor prisoner received to the warm embrace of maternal and friendly affection; but the joy of this meeting had a most bitter alloy. The Duchess and her friends had only been able to procure permission to visit their

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child,

child, and it was not without great difficulty they had, in addition to this small indulgence, obtained leave for her to have an attendant.

They had called to take me with them, well knowing my anxious affection, and the Marquise directed Adrian to follow us in a *fiacre*.

But the moment I saw Adelaide's pale disordered countenance, I whispered the Duchess that I would acquaint myself with every particular of her situation; and, if I found it to accord with her dejected appearance, not Adrian, but myself, should be her attendant.

The poor child, who was too much disgusted with the convent La Borde, the Abbess la Croix, and all of the Sisterhood she had seen, to endure, with patience, the prospect of a longer confinement, was much more inclined to be angry, like the Duchess, than to accede to the reasons of her mother, while she could neither comprehend nor admit the justice of a system

that sacrificed the peace of an individual to state intrigue.

I left the Marquise endeavouring, though with no great prospect of success, to prove, that however to be regretted the effect, the cause did not attach blame to her connections at Versailles ; and requested one of the frightful Nuns, who passed the door, to shew me the apartment of Adelaide.

The woman carried adamant on her brow : I knew no bribe was of value to her ; but, fortunately recollecting I had some *bon bons*, she mumbled them with such *gout* as procured me all the information I thought necessary.

I then asked permission to pay my respects to the Abbess, which, in order, perhaps, to enhance the favour, was not without some difficulty granted. She was at least sixty years old, bloated, infirm, and must have always been ill-looking.

I endeavoured to address her in a manner that would claim civility if not indulgence ; but her mind, as well as body, was

was made up of crooked points—she was inaccessible to kindness, and sat immoveable in her armed chair, while I delivered the order for the admission of an attendant on Adelaide, and, after remonstrating against the severity with which she had been treated, I requested that the young prisoner might have a better apartment.

The Abbess opened her half-closed eyes. I observed she seemed to speak, and even look by some rule, but I had not yet penetrated her mystery.

The cell, occupied by the prisoner, she said, being precisely that which was reserved for people in her unhappy predicament, could not be changed without a particular order from her Bishop; and, in respect to an attendant like me, for a state prisoner, to be sure the order was decisive, and her creed was passive obedience. She was not in the habit of receiving boarders; the business of her little community was to prepare themselves for the next world,

not to qualify pupils for the vanity of this, they were, therefore, too much pre-occupied in their holy vocations to attend to the accommodation of the luxurious.

I now followed the heavy roll of her forbidding eye to the recess where her crucifix stood: the rule of her conduct was explained, an ecclesiastic was seated there, who, though it was long since I had seen him, I immediately recollected to be the Abbe Rocquelar; he must have also perceived that his presence inspired neither respect or pleasure. The *outlines* of his character and conduct, had only reached the family of the Duke de V., but they were sufficient to alarm me for the situation of my poor Adelaide, and I had just time to settle the conduct proper to be observed to him, when he approached.

I did not affect to recognise him, but he was not so easily imposed upon. He saluted me civilly by my name; enquired after the family of the Duke as well as the Marquis; had

had been astonished to find the daughter of such great Court favourites a state prisoner; former habits of friendship for the father interested him for the child; and, if the Abbess *could*, without departing from the strict rules of her order, grant any indulgences——.

The Abbess interrupted him with assurance that, however inclined to oblige *him*, no indulgence was in her power.

He bowed with an air of humble submission; regretted that a convent of such well-known austerity, should have been selected for the confinement of an offender so young and beautiful; but, as it was not for those of his humble class, to censure the higher powers, entreated me to present his devoirs to the Marquise, and assure her of his zeal in her service.

You know, Lady N., what a Lavaterian I am, but I should not pretend to merit in penetrating the heart of this man from his countenance; for, although, as I said before, the outlines only of his character

had ever reached me, these were of a complexion to fix me to two points—on no account to be separated from Adelaide, and to conceal from her parents what I saw was a mortifying truth, “that their daughter was certainly, in some degree, in the power of a discarded dependant of their family.

I found Adelaide, who, till my leaving the parlour, believed we were come to release her, still in tears, supported by her mother; the Duchess, too ill and too indignant at her situation, to afford either comfort or assistance.

The most profound despair is said to leave an opening for consolation, and Adelaide’s tears immediately subsided, on hearing me declare my resolution to remain with her. The consciousness that I was not only performing a duty to the dear child who always shared my maternal love, but proving my gratitude to the two families to whom I was so much bound, gave a cheerful expression to my countenance, which

which I could not else have assumed, when I considered how I was leaving my own daughter; but confident of the protecting care of my friends, and little foreseeing the length of time that would elapse, and the sad scenes that would intervene, before I should be again restored to her, to them, and to the world, I saw them depart without any of those painful presentiments that, on many former occasions, filled me with apprehension.

A cell was offered to me at the opposite extremity of the building, which, firm to my point, I rejected. Adelaide had but one stool; but I was not now to learn how to make a virtue of necessity. I took my seat on the bed: the dawn of every day, it is true, renewed hopes, which the close proved fallacious; but, in the intermediate space, we could converse without reserve, and thus contrived to rest on the brown mattress, till days, weeks, and even months, passing on without hearing from any friend, the agonising suspense, which

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every

every day increased became insupportable. At length, think what I felt when, after sounds that burst at once on the sombre silence of our convent, like the crush of worlds, the roar of cannon, the glare of flames through the dim and lofty windows, the shouts and screams, as it seemed, of the whole universe, the horrible *tocsin*, and the alarm-bells. It was hinted to me that the Bastile was no more—that thousands of people were destroyed, some by the bayonet, some by the cannon, and many buried under its ruins. Good Heavens! conceive my anxiety, my distress, the Count was a prisoner there.—“The city,” whispered a Nun, “is a scene of riot and blood-shed;” and what conclusion could I now draw from the total neglect of all our friends, but that they were included in the general calamity: yet, while my own heart was breaking, I had fortitude to conceal its agony from my innocent companion, but my health suffered not less from the restraint I imposed on myself,

myself, than the grief that oppressed me—instead of the support I had hitherto been to Adelaide, I was becoming an useless burthen on her, when I thought I should have expired with fear of fatal tidings, as Adelaide said she was near doing for joy on seeing one well known face, which proved, though entombed alive, we were not quite forgotten.

How the Chevalier de Verencourt procured admittance we did not think of asking ; but when we were expecting he would deliver to us billets from our friends, and asking a million of questions, he answered briefly “ all was well,” but would neither enter into particulars nor charge himself with the smallest remembrance from us. He *could not*, he said, he *dared not* explain at what a rate he had purchased this dear indulgence ; the least penalty he would incur by breaking the imposed rules, was a deprivation of the happiness he now enjoyed, perhaps, indeed, his life might, in that case, be the forfeit.

"I have," he added, "only to repeat all your friends are well; sad and serious events have occurred, but *they* are safe."— Oh, how my soul was prostrated before that Being who had only witnessed my secret anguish, for this assurance vague as it was.—"Your daughter," he added, "has taken up your pen: she has talents, no doubt: and, when you leave this place, you will see a journal of such events as, when you entered it, you would have believed incredible."

Till that happened, nothing broke on the sameness of our existence, but the visits of the Chevalier with his "no news." I shall, therefore, begin a fresh packet from the journals of Charlotte, with incidents which too fatally blended the history of my friends, with the ruin of their country.

H. ST. HERMAN.

PACKET IX.

YOUR Ladyship will perceive the date of this packet is to be taken from the period when I became a voluntary prisoner in the convent La Borde.

Scarce had the carriage of the Duchess de V. proceeded the length of one street from the Convent, when it was so completely hemmed in by mobs of common people, running from all directions towards the hospital of invalids, that it was with great difficulty the ladies reached the Palais de V. where the Duke waited to conduct the

the Duchess back to Versailles. He had there indeed witnessed a scene little less alarming than what was described to be passing in Paris; but though no one could decide which of the two were least tranquil, he chose to remain near the King; and as he was not easy when the Duchess was out of his immediate and personal protection, attended her to Paris, for the sole purpose of re-conducting her back to Versailles.

On the report of the ladies, however, he repaired to the Prince Lambesque, whom he with great difficulty reached, after being stopped in almost every street by the crowds, who were bearing effigies of Neckar and D'O. in deep mourning.

The Prince had already called out the whole military force, and posted them in the Thuilleries; but conceive his mortification and surprise, when the whole guard set fire to their barracks, and joined the citizens, leaving the Prince, the Duke, and some Nobles who surrounded them, to the guard of a few Germans.

Paris

Paris from this moment became such a scene of outrageous confusion, that it was no longer safe for the King's friends to remain there. The Duke returned to his Palais, and insisted on setting off immediately to Versailles.

Charlotte had now but the alternative of leaving Paris, while both Adelaide and myself were confined there, or taking refuge at the house of Monsieur Chevereux. She preferred the latter; and having obtained permission to take leave of Ninon, was, as she expected, made a prisoner.

In fact, as Ninon, who was still ill, had expressed great anxiety for Charlotte's return, and as every message to that effect had been answered with the evasions resulting from fear of a second compulsive detention, Madame Chevereux no sooner heard of Charlotte's arrival, than she issued a second *veto* against her departure.

The billet, announcing this regal management, found the Duke and Duchess waiting
for

for her, the former in great impatience. The Marquise had not even alighted; and as no doubt could be entertained of Charlotte's safety, they also set off immediately.

"Here," said the Duchess, when the carriage stopped at the Castle to set the Duke down, "here we shall at least be quiet."

"And if appearances are to be trusted," replied the Duke, observing the countenance of some of the household, "joyous."

The Duchess could not comprehend how, in the present situation of public affairs, that could be. Her carriage drove on, and the Duke proceeded to the royal apartments.

"Great events happened during our short absence," said the Marquise, who met him in the antichamber. "We," she added with a countenance that ill accorded with her words, "we are all transported with joy. Neckar is disgraced, and the courtly Marquis of B—t—l succeeds him."

"And

“ And this,” replied the Duke, “ transports you with joy ?”

“ Certainly ;” but the tears of the Marquise were not those of joy. “ You know the measures adopted to prevent the renegade clergy from taking their seats with their fellows of the lower order, and that the Mayor of Paris moved the assembly to a tennis court in the old street of Versailles.”

All this the Duke knew had happened before he went to Paris. He had exceedingly condemned the measure of placing guards round the hall of the assembly.—“ You can no longer” said he, “ call the deliberations of these people free.”

“ Well,” continued the Marquise, “ then what you do not know is, that at a period when we all see an armed power is actually necessary to quell the riots in Paris, this good assembly sent a deputation, at the head of whom was the silly Chevereux, to implore his Majesty’s order for the troops we have so long been expecting, to stop,
and

and even turn back. Neckar, afraid of his popularity, advised the King to accede to their request, and this, yes, this has done for him. The man's manners were to be sure pleasant; but the failure of every scheme to retrieve what never *can* be retrieved, which he very unwisely promised, was not calculated to conciliate the dislike some of us had taken to him. They, however, made him amends in the assembly: divided among themselves on every petty question, there is one point in which, joined by the Ministers of *Peace*, they are unanimous—the King must be humbled. So they have voted Neckar to carry with him their confidence and regret, and made the present Ministers personally answerable for calamities they are themselves determined to promote.”

“ The riots at Paris,” said the Duke, “ with the figure of their idol, Neckar, is now accounted for; but why have they companioned him with D’O.? how is he ? ”

“ Oh

“ Oh heavens ! the woman-killing hero ! ” exclaimed the Marquise, “ after the subjugation of the King, can you ask that ? But I am going to tell the Duchess how much I wish we were all at Bergin Castle, notwithstanding our triumph over the fallen Minister.”

“ And,” said the Duke, turning back, “ as the audience I was going to demand would ill accord with joy and triumph, I will postpone it till the evening.”

Considering the small distance of Versailles from the capital, it is an almost incredible fact, that the King and Queen were yet ignorant of the tumult at Paris ; but the creatures of the Ministers knowing how unpleasant the truth would be, no doubt mutilated the account to them : the Court, as the Marquise said, were in a delirium of joy which it was not polite to interrupt ; and the Assembly, who were better informed, took no trouble about an affair that strengthened them in power in proportion as it weakened the Court.

Dreadful

Dreadful indeed at this moment was the progress of civil discord. The nightly hordes of banditti, who infested the streets of Paris, and who only could be benefitted by the subversion of order, were now joined by the infatuated citizens, who with them paraded the city the whole of the day after that on which the Duke returned to Versailles.

Afraid to proceed, unable to retract, annoyed by a desperate mob, and trembling for the consequence to themselves and their families, a number of the superior citizens assembled at the Hotel de Ville, to consult on measures for restoring public tranquillity; but they were there followed by many thousands, actuated by very different motives. The supineness of the King, the vices of the Queen, the removal of Neckar, and the approach of the army, were the incessant outcry of the rabble, accompanied by the most dreadful imprecations, at the same moment when the work of general pillage went on without the smallest interruption.

Many

Many of the inhabitants, on returning to their homes, found them, some empty, some mutilated, and many burned to the ground ; even the charitable house of St. Lazare was entirely stripped. The alarm became general : all were involved in one common danger ; and the encouragement which curiosity, patriotism, and perhaps wantonness first gave the desperados, now menaced universal destruction. The alarm-bells were rung. The yells of faction, the shouts of inebriety, with the blaze of different fires, were heard and seen in all directions.

Couriers, who arrived every hour at the Hotel de Ville with account of the proceedings of the National Assembly, carried back the information, that sixty thousand men were enrolled in the capital, and one, no doubt, supported the other. Patroles of the faction, whom the rebel guards supplied with arms and ammunition, were every where seen ; and by sunrise the next morning, the sixty thousand of the preceding

ceding day were trebled, and surrounding the Hotel des Invalides they seized eighty thousand stand of arms. Oh the horrid *tocsins*! never shall I forget their terrific sound!

After the pause of an hour, when we, observe, Lady N., I include all the inhabitants of our wretched Convent, for the poor women who were bound to pass their lives in the gloomy cloisters of La Borde, and seemed to have no tie of temporal existence, were more alarmed than either Adelaide or myself; we were hoping then that a calm would succeed the dreadful storm, but a sudden discharge of cannon shook the old building to its centre, broke the painted glass windows of the chapel, and crowded every creature into the parlour, where, had we not found the Abbe Rocquelar comforting the affrighted Abbess, half the nuns would have rushed into the sinful world they had so long abjured. But what in part quieted them,

would.

would have destroyed Adelaide, had she not chosen rather to return to her distant cell than remain in presence of the Abbe, who, without exactly knowing why, she extremely disliked ; but the first word he uttered rivetted me to the spot.

The Bastile was attacked !

“ Oh, good God !” I inadvertently exclaimed, “ the poor Count de V ——”

“ Is by this time,” said the monster, “ buried beneath its ruins !”

Well, Lady N., certain that you are interested for that amiable man, I will not torture you, as Rocquelar did me, but pass to the means of his escape.

When does headstrong wilfulness know where to stop ? The turbulent mob were armed enough for destruction, though not exactly in military uniform ; but some infatuated or infernal spirit reminded them of the *depôt* of arms in the Bastile. Away the monstrous assembly ran to that fortress, and demanded arms from the Governor.

The

The Marquis de Launay, a loyal enthusiast, considered all opposition to the old *regime* as the worst of treason and rebellion, and disdaining the demand equally with the rabble who made it, instead of complying, he instantly set about putting the Castle in as complete a state of defence as time and circumstances admitted.

The Count de V., not less zealous in loyalty, because he was a prisoner for not marrying the daughter of a patriot, encouraged the garrison by his own example and bravery, at the same time that he remonstrated against mounting the cannons on the walls, which, however, Launay persisted in doing, and thereby gave the first pretext for a mission from the city ; but it was in vain the Deputies harangued, and equally vain that the Comte privately persuaded ; the governor was immovable in respect to the obnoxious cannon ; but he acceded to the Comte's second advice, and pledged his honour they should not be
turned

turned on the citizens, except hostilities were first commenced by them.

In this confidence the Deputies retired ; but a number of young men, just enrolled in the militia, who had no arms, approached close to the gates, and demanded a supply from the Marquis.

The unfortunate De Launay, a brave soldier of the old school, of stubborn spirit and warm passions, was not equal to a provocation so new, so daring, and, in his opinion, so criminal. After repeated refusals, which rather irritated than dispersed, a number of unarmed men were admitted over the drawbridge within the gate.

The Comte, whose graceful figure, noble mien, and interesting countenance, impressed the beholder with respect, could not fail to command attention from those he now addressed in the language of mild persuasion.

James Marchand, one of the first who entered the court, was a mercer who had long served the family of the Duke de V.

While this man had vainly exerted every effort of industry to support his credit and maintain his family, bitterly imprecating the high *unprincipled* blood that had actually forced, or, as in this country we should say, swindled, the goods out of his shop, he remembered and blessed the honourable rectitude of the De Verencourts, whose punctual and generous payments had often protracted that ruin it could not eventually avert.

You remember, Lady N., the old fable of the Lion and the Mouse, and this is the moral. Marchand joined the Comte, speaking with energy indeed, but not without some reason on general grievances, enumerating those which were the ostensible provocatives of the people's desperation, and some which particularly affected himself. Fortunately for both the Comte and Marchand, the interest of the subject carried them farther into the interior court than either intended. A general discharge of musketry, followed by shrieks, groans, and exclamations,

exclamations, called them back, where the promiscuous heaps of dead and dying explained a tragedy that turned them pale with horror.

The Comte, whose expedient it had been to engage the confidence of the citizens by pledge of the Governor's honour for forbearance, except hostilities were commenced by them, could not, like De Launay, consider any provocation of unarmed men in a fortified garrison as an act of hostility to warrant the breach of an engagement of honour. His heart smote him when he beheld a number of comparatively innocent victims to the confidence placed in himself, and he was hastening to De Launay, full of horror and indignation, when Marchand, who had been wounded by the sabre of one of the Swiss guards, came weltering in his blood to implore his protection.

The Comte bore him instantly in his arms to the surgeon.

"My poor friend," said he, "alas! you are murdered!"

Before the surgeon had finished dressing the wounds, the cry of the garrison “to arms!” and shouts from without the walls, that seemed to rend the skies, called the Comte back to the scene of action; but before he could gain the interior court, a soldier of the National Guards having broken the bolts and locks of the draw-bridge, an outrageous multitude were pouring into the outward court, whom the sight of their dead comrades enraged to madness.

The Comte was all an hero in soul and sentiment could be. It was now no time to think on the blame attached to individuals; the cause was that of the King, the nation, and the laws. The contest was terrible, and maintained with varied success and equal obstinacy, till a veteran of the National Guard set fire to a large quantity of straw on the outside the walls, which assisted the besiegers, while it obstructed the sight of the garrison. The arsenal was stormed, and all lost.

The

The Governor in despair proposed burying themselves and their merciless conquerors in one general ruin, by setting fire to the magazine; but the Comte, whose intrepid valour had rendered him conspicuous enough to be marked for vengeance, and who would have been hacked to death rather than ask quarter from a rebel, opposed an expedient, that, beside the adjoining buildings, would blow up the principal part of the suburb of St. Antoine, and devote thousands of innocent persons to death.—“ You, Sir,” said he to De Launay, “ and I, whose forfeited word began this bloody business, may be proper victims; but the garrison, who have done their duty, why should they fall?”

“ I am not to blame,” answered the Governor in distraction; “ I can explain.”

“ Alas, Marquis!” replied the Comte, “ this is not the time for explanation; we must die. You have distinguished yourself in the field of battle. We must meet our fate; let us, therefore, do it like men.”

“ Yes,” said the Marquis, “ I have fought, but not with tygers,” and he ran towards the *Tours la Liberté* with a lighted match.

The Comte followed, and with great difficulty tore it from him.

Meanwhile a Swiss officer had hung out a white handkerchief; but the enraged populace, whose cannon were now battering down the walls, would attend to no concessions, they were not even moved by the threat of setting fire to the magazine, which was written and thrown to them. Without all was desperate fury!—within all terror and confusion!

When the Comte had prevented the catastrophe intended by the Governor, he returned to the ranks, and served himself in every part where example could animate; while the Marquis de Launay, in the awful pause between the conquerors passing the bridge and entering the gate, which was open to them, seemed to recollect the value of life. During the moment the garrison,
one

one side invalids, the other Swiss guards, piled their arms against the walls, the Comte, standing before them, haughtily erect, and prepared to meet his fate, De Launay actually found means to alter his dress, and had reached the gate before he was discovered.

The signal for general carnage were a thousand wounds on that unfortunate man ; and, in the same moment, the Comte found himself seized, and dragged a byeway through the interior, down many flight of steps, to a dungeon, where he was chained to the ground, and left.

Every officer in the garrison, with the Marquis de Peletier, a prisoner, were massacred on the spot, and a guard placed round the half-demolished fortress. The wounded Marchand, the only one living of the unarmed crowd who first entered, was carried in triumph to the Hotel de Ville, and universally congratulated on his escape.

After the first fury of revenge had subsided, Marchand, though unable to move himself, reminded the most active leaders

of the multitude, that in destroying the fortress, they had neglected to liberate the prisoners.

“ The prisoners, the prisoners ! ” was shouted by thousands, who ran back to the fortress.

The Comte was in that moment dropping a farewell tear to Adelaide ; he had offered a last prayer for his noble father, and even ceased to wish for life, when the trampling of feet, bursting of locks, and clanking of chains prepared him for the death he expected. The door of his dungeon was burst open ; a multitude entered, removed his chains, and bore him on their shoulders with songs of triumph to the open air, where, amid the gratulation of the surrounding mob, were the few prisoners found in the fortress, who had been released, and were now in the same situation with himself.

The Comte saw it was as impossible to escape, as to guess what was next to become of him. He looked round in amazement, and recognised one face regarding him with a meaning too kind to
be

be misunderstood ; but before he could draw any inference from this interesting circumstance, he was again lifted on their shoulders, and carried among the crowd to the house of a citizen, and as soon as his bearers were withdrawn, found himself, to his astonishment, locked in the embraces of the wounded Marchand.

Three brothers of this good man, to whom he had been in every tender sense a father, were among the foremost avengers of the death of the unarmed citizens. They had seen their brother enter the gate, and doubted not he had shared the fate of his companions ; but they found him, to their joyful surprise, alive, his wound dressed, and a witness of the bravery, as well as humanity of the young Comte, who, panting with fatigue, was still in sight.

All these brothers shared the vindictive temper of the people ; but Marchand, sensible he owed his life to the son of his patron, entreated his brothers, as they valued it, to save his preserver.

One of the young men, Charles Marchand, had been valet to a nobleman once confined, under the heavy displeasure of the King, in the Bastile. It instantly struck him, that Rossier, the Deputy-Governor, to whom assurance of fraternity had already been given, knew the Comte, and could not have failed to remark his active valour. A moment's delay might be fatal: they seized him as I have related, and by carrying him out of immediate danger, well indeed acquitted the obligation of their brother.

Justice, as the Parisan mob chose to call the summary execution, at which humanity shuddered, was not yet appeased, notwithstanding the goary heads, which, fixed on long poles, paraded the streets. The barriers were guarded, and any attempt to pass them would now be an act of desperation; and the grateful Marchand implored the Comte to accept the protection of his humble roof, at least till he could leave it with safety.

The

The Comte could not but be sensible of the kind motive for these precautions ; but what danger to himself could reconcile him to a moment's delay, while ignorant of the fate of all who were endeared to his soul by honour, by duty, and by love.—“ If I lose my life in the attempt,” said he, “ I will endeavour to reach Versailles.”

The capital was still in the wildest tumult. In one street executions were going on ; in another songs of triumph preceded the livid heads, accompanied by bands of music ; in a third groups were preparing to dig holes, for the double purpose of impeding the approach of cavalry, and burying the mutilated bodies. On the top of many houses were a number of armed men, who amused themselves by firing on passers-by of a suspicious appearance ; and the windows were so generally illuminated, that none could escape. The patroles charged the citizens to keep watch, while themselves were committing every disorder. To complete his confusion, Marchand had

heard Rossier mention the Comte as the joint contriver, with De Launay, of the murder of the citizens. How then, thus environed, could he hope to reach even his father's palais in safety ?

The Marchands, to whom both the danger he had escaped, and that he had yet to fear, infinitely endeared him, blended arguments with tears to prevail on him to remain, if only for that night, with them.—“ You talk, my Lord,” said the elder, “ of going to Versailles as you would have done ten days since. Ah ! God only knows what is at this moment transacting there !”

The Comte trembled. His father—the Duchess—Adelaide—all might be at that moment subject to insult, danger, death ! Tears filled his eyes.—“ Do I then hesitate ?” said he. “ Is there an evil on earth so dreadful as that of abandoning my family in distress ? Oh Marchand ! if you regard me——”

“ Regard you, my Lord !” answered the good man, “ if I could forget the favours
of

of your family, can I ever cease to remember to whom I owe my own life?"

Scarce had Marchand spoken, when Dimanche, the famous patriot to whom I introduced you at the hotel of Monsieur Chevereux, with his tall son, entered to congratulate Marchand on his escape; he instantly recollected the Comte.

"Ah!" cried he, "my Lord, the Comte, is it you? you who was to have married Mademoiselle Chevereux, but thought better of the bargain? How did you arrange with Madame her mother? Monsieur *L'Avocat* is no longer in favour with the courtiers. But how is this? you are in *déshabillé*. Are you a sharer in the glory of this day? How much greater the title of destroyer of the Bastile, than Comte or Duke! Ha, ha! I am diverted at the idea of Madame Chevereux, the old Jew's tall daughter, mother-in-law to a Noble! Ha, ha!"

Young Dimanche, always designed by his mamma for the little heiress, had lately found out of himself she was pretty and
amiable,

to inflict, that was far from being dissipated by the disconcerted, angry, and terrified countenance of her friend. This was indeed a fearful moment for Charlotte ; all her Spanish castles were levelled, and the Talisman against self-reproach broken to atoms.

The Chevalier, the hateful seducer of her understanding, by whom she had been made an instrument to torture her best friends, was now, in the plenitude of superior cunning, enjoying a triumph which the affected humility of his posture could not conceal.

It was too much ; her high spirit, mortified, not subdued, burst out in bitter accusations of herself, and not less bitter reflections on him. Accusation was retorted with recrimination ; and cool sarcastic contempt, on the part of the Chevalier, provoked the anger, rage, and resentment of Charlotte out of all bounds of prudence or self-respect ; each, regardless of the petrified witness of their mutual violence, and the secret it disclosed, till recalled to
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the usual consequence of vindictive passion "repentance," by the agonies of the injured Ninon.

"Barbarous Charlotte!" she exclaimed, "to what a refinement of cruelty have you carried imposition, for the wanton purpose of torturing a heart whose only offence towards you was simple affection! You have not only degraded yourself by rendering one who never injured you miserable and ridiculous; but you have made me a curse to the man for whom I could die, and the woman I most respect. Well, may the daughter of the Marquise de Courville be inaccessible to the little mischievous citizen. But I fly to her; yes, it is at her feet I will declare my ignorance and my innocence. But the *Comte*, Oh, where shall I find *him*? What language will suffice to paint my despair to *him*? what humiliation will atone for my presumption? and must I then cease to love, to adore *him*?"

It was now, while Charlotte traversed the path in agitation and agony; the Chevalier's

gate opened, and two females came out, who appeared in great agitation to be supporting each other: they were evidently weeping, spake low, and walked fast.

Attracted by one of those secret presentiments of which every one speaks, but for which no one can account, he followed them through bye streets, to which he was a stranger, till they stopped at a convent gate, and rung the bell.

After some delay, the portress appeared. He heard a voice of soft complaint and entreaty, answered with a surly negative. The earnestness of the entreaty seemed to redouble as the negative became weaker. At length the portress retired, and the two females continued in the porch.

The Comte drew nearer.

“ If they do not admit us, we will wait till day-light,” said a voice he well remembered.

“ Charlotte St. Herman !” cried the overjoyed Comte.

“ Ah, my God !” exclaimed Ninon,
“ what do I hear ?—Is it you ? and do you
indeed

indeed live? Have I not caused your death? Do I hear the voice so dear, so loved? Let me be satisfied you live, before I devote myself to God for ever, in grateful thanks for sparing my soul the grief, the guilt of murder!"

"Your soul, Mademoiselle, can never know a guilt so opposite to your nature. Why should you suppose you have murdered me?"

"Ah Comte!" interrupted Charlotte, "let me stifle you with my embraces. Poor Ninon and I were bewailing your fate, not only as you are so good and so handsome, but as we considered ourselves accessory to your destruction."

"But what, my friends," asked the Comte, "are you doing in the streets on such a night, without protection?"

Ninon had taken his hand, she had embraced it, she had even pressed it to her lips; but tears were, he felt, expiating the action from which virgin modesty recoiled.

He could not be insensible to an attachment so pure; he avowed himself flattered

by such marks of generous regard.—“ But what, my friends,” he repeated, “ are you doing here ?”

“ We, we, Oh Lord !” cried Charlotte, “ we were going to be nuns ; but, now I think of it, what are *you* doing here ?”

“ Ah ! what indeed,” joined Ninon.

“ Do you know,” cried Charlotte trembling, “ you have murdered the Lord knows how many horrid citizens, and that nothing on earth can pacify more than fifty thousand of their friends, but the assurance that you already are, or certainly will be, torn to pieces !”

“ All this may be very true,” answered the Comte,” except that I was wilfully accessory to the death of the unfortunate men who perished this morning, for that, upon my honour, I was not.”

“ Ah ! what need of this ?” cried Ninon impatiently. “ Do we not know you ? Yet you are exposed to the frenzy of madmen, to assassins, to death !”

“ Where is Adelaide ?” was rising to the Comte’s lips ; but to give pain to the meanest
of

of God's creatures was not in his nature, much less to one so tenderly interested in his safety as Ninon.

"Where can I go?" said he in some confusion. "I cannot gain admittance to my father's palais, I cannot pass the barriers, nor can I——"

"With me," interrupted Ninon, "with me you will be safe; return with me to *my* father's; there at least you will be concealed. I am by this time missed. My poor mother is in distraction. Oh! how much pain I have lately given her; but she cannot resist the prayer of her child. My parents will conceal you till you can escape the present peril, till you can be restored to your noble father, to the amiable Duchess, the beautiful, happy——"

Ninon was every hour approaching nearer, but she had not yet actually attained perfection. She is, as I have before told you, the only heroine of this history; but she found it as difficult to name Adelaide to the Comte, as he had just found it to speak of one woman
whom

whom *he* adored, to another who adored *him*."

The portress seasonably returned. The Abbess had changed her mind ; she would, though at so unseasonable an hour, receive the two penitents on the terms they proposed.

" Very well," answered Ninon ; " but we have also changed ours, and will not trouble her to-night."

" Santa Maria !" exclaimed the mortified and disappointed portress ; but our Abbess is ready to receive you."

" She should have been ready before," returned Charlotte pettishly. " Is it on such a night as this that she detains young woman in the porch of her convent ?"

" Go, Mademoiselle," returned the portress, " to the Bicetre ; you are more fit for that retirement I believe than ours."

" You are rude," answered Ninon, putting her hand to Charlotte's mouth, who could seldom be accused of giving up the last word ; but we have disturbed you ; forgive us, and distribute those alms as you please."

" Benedict !"

“Benedict!” said the portress, first taking the purse from Ninon, and then locking the gate.

The Comte, notwithstanding his danger, was half abstracted.—“*Restore you to the happy,*” had a meaning he longed to have explained.

Ninon again urged his return with her.

“The old man,” whispered Charlotte, taking his arm, as Ninon did her’s, “will fatigue you with his speeches; and his wife is actually a disease; but they will not betray you.”

The Comte, who considered the great speaker as his most inveterate enemy, could not comprehend; but was less solicitous about himself, since a return to “*the beautiful, the happy,*” was admitted to be possible.

They succeeded in pushing through a crowd of the most gratified persons in Paris, who were returning from a fresh execution at the Greve, with the head of a female victim gracing their corps on the point of a spear.

“But

“ But where,” whispered the Comte to Charlotte, “ is Adelaide ? ”

“ Oh, for heaven’s sake,” she answered, “ don’t talk of her with such an object in view !—She is confined by a *lettre de cachet* in the convent we have just left, where, though I am now returning so quietly, I intended to mortify for the sin that carried her there.”

“ Where ? ” cried the Comte in astonishment.

“ Ah, Lord ! ” shrieked Charlotte, “ we are undone ! What, what is that ? ”

“ We are betrayed ! ” whispered the trembling Ninon.

“ Where,” repeated the Comte. “ did you say Adelaide was ? By a *lettre de cachet* ? is Adelaide confined ? and in that obscure convent ? ”

“ Is the man mad ? ” cried Charlotte, gasping for breath. “ Don’t talk ; you are lost !—See there, see there ! ”

On the opposite side of the street three men, muffled in great coats, were close to a dead wall, evidently watching their motions :

motions; but the Comte, his heart only occupied by the confinement of Adelaide, could not be brought to attend to them.

“Cruel Charlotte!” said he, “not to tell me those dark walls inclosed the treasure of my soul.”

“And if I had told you, what could you have done? Ah, have you no compassion? Do you not see it is with extreme difficulty we support each other? Help us, or we sink!”

“*A lettre de cachet!* Oh my Adelaide! had they then the heart——”

The men still kept in view, and Ninon, whose attention even the Comte’s exclamation had not power to divert, sunk fainting from her friend’s arm.

Charlotte’s heart never waited for her head; she shrieked incessantly. The danger of the Comte gave way to the situation of Ninon. The passing crowd were soon attracted; but again it was the Comte that superseded Ninon, for she plainly saw the men advance and insinuate themselves between him and the people, whose numbers

bers

bers augmented every moment, and very soon neither the objects of her terror, nor that of her solicitude were to be seen.

It was no longer Ninon nor Adelaide, but the Comte's head, elevated on a spear, from which her imagination recoiled. Convulsions succeeded, till she recognised her apartment at the hotel of M. Chevereux, with Madame C. and her women administering restoratives, and Ninon sitting near, pale as a midnight spectre.

The events of the night appeared like a strange incoherent dream.

"Ninon," said she, "are we awake?"—Tears, which dropped on her extended hand, proved the reality.—"Ah, Ninon, it is not then a dream!"

"No, Mademoiselle, no," said Madame Chevereux, "it is no dream; and really it seems to me you have not much benefited by your grand connections, they have surely turned your brain. For *you* indeed, who are only the *protégée* of people who are going to nothing themselves, to turn nun, is no great matter; but to persuade
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the only daughter of Monsieur Chevereux, the great patriot, the great speaker, and the richest advocate in Paris, to such vagaries is the most ridiculous thing I ever heard of.—*Ma foi!* it is quite nonsense to think because one Comte won't, no other will; for a great Prince, and, what is more, a great patriot, said to my spouse, 'it is an honour, Monsieur C., to be allied to you, and were not *your* honour concerned in keeping the Comte to his engagement with your beautiful daughter?'—yes, he said 'beautiful,' and so she is,—'well,' said he, 'I should propose my own son;' and so I dare say he will when he hears the wicked Comte, who killed so many good patriots, is now killed himself."

Neither Ninon or Charlotte were disposed for interruption; they sat in silence, their eyes fixed by turns on the ground, and on each other.

The Comte's death (which, though reported in many different ways, was not doubted as to the fact), had reached the two friends early in the evening.

" All is over ! " cried Charlotte. " There is nothing new worth living for. For my part, I am resolved to go to the convent *la Basine*. Adelaide will never return to a world where there is no longer a *Comte de V.* ; and my mother will not leave her."

Nanon felt there was as little left for her in the world as for Adelaide ; and she also felt that without Charlotte it would be hardly possible to her, so weeping and enduring, they adopted a system of fasting and prayer in the society they both loved, and the society, as well as importance of the undertaking, left little time even for the years they were well disposed to shed to the memory of the unfortunate Comte.

The call to God was a plain, few good Catholics yet lived to resist. Nanon left a pathetic letter, to that effect, for her parents, and mentioning despair for resignation, the two drawbacks and advantage of the confusion, which in other circumstances would have appalled sterner hearts than hers,

Glas,

lights, and stole out of Monsieur Cheverson's house as midnight drew the streets illuminated and red, but full of darkness.

Madame C., one moment glowing in the triumph of what was called patriotism, without a single idea annexed to the meaning of the phrase, and well suited her work as the innumerable processions of heads passing her house, added as fear of damaging her fine furniture by illuminating the windows, was well enough disposed to wish both parties in purgatory. Before Victor's letter was put into her hands, and completed the business. But she would not be another as a man, no she she would search every nook in Paris, and take her daughter every by force; yes, and remembering Madame was in that of La Fayette, she would begin there. So, summoning the attendance of her household, she was passing thither at the instant when the excellent lungs of Charlotte out-burned the alarm bells.

The name of Cheverson collected lights and people enough for a royal procession.

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The way was cleared, and the two insensibles carried home, followed by Madame Chevereux and her household, and loudly protesting against being mother to a nun.

The fatigue and agitation, however, was rather too much even for the robust Madame Chevereux. Ninon entreated her to retire to rest, to which she acceded, after extorting an oath from her daughter, that she would never be a nun; and a solemn promise from Charlotte, that if she took the veil, it should be without Ninon for a companion; and perhaps Lady N. may also be disposed to rest as well as her's, most truly,

II. ST. HERMAN.

END OF VOL. II.

—(O)—

LANT, MINERVA PRESS, LEADENHALL-STREET



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